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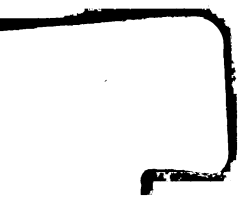

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NISIDA, THE BELOVED DAUGHTER OF SOLOMON,
THE FISHERMAN,
WAS THE LOVELIEST FLOWER OF THE ISLAND
FROM WHICH SHE DERIVED HER NAME

—p. 1415

From the painting by Eugene von Blaas

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KARL LUDWIG SAND
URBAIN GRANDIER
NISIDA

VOLUME IV

ILLUSTRATED

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KARL-LUDWIG SAND

1819

ON the 22nd of March, 1819, about nine o'clock in the morning, a young man, some twenty-three or twenty-four years old, wearing the dress of a German student, which consists of a short frock-coat with silk braiding, tight trousers, and high boots, paused upon a little eminence that stands upon the road between Kaiserthal and Mannheim, at about three-quarters of the distance from the former town, and commands a view of the latter. Mannheim is seen rising calm and smiling amid gardens which once were ramparts, and which now surround and embrace it like a girdle of foliage and flowers. Having reached this spot, he lifted his cap, above the peak of which were embroidered three interlaced oak leaves in silver, and uncovering his brow, stood bareheaded for a moment to feel the fresh air that rose from the valley of the Neckar. At first sight his irregular features produced a strange impression; but before long the pallor of his face, deeply marked by small-pox, the infinite gentleness of his eyes, and the elegant framework of his long and flowing black hair, which grew in an admirable curve around a broad,

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high forehead, attracted towards him that emotion of sad sympathy to which we yield without inquiring its reason or dreaming of resistance. Though it was still early, he seemed already to have come some distance, for his boots were covered with dust; but no doubt he was nearing his destination, for, letting his cap drop, and hooking into his belt his long pipe, that inseparable companion of the German *Bursch*, he drew from his pocket a little note-book, and wrote in it with a pencil: "Left Wanheim at five in the morning, came in sight of Mannheim at a quarter-past nine." Then putting his note-book back into his pocket, he stood motionless for a moment, his lips moving as though in mental prayer, picked up his hat, and walked on again with a firm step towards Mannheim.

This young Student was Karl-Ludwig Sand, who was coming from Jena, by way of Frankfort and Darmstadt, in order to assassinate Kotzebue.

Now, as we are about to set before our readers one of those terrible actions for the true appreciation of which the conscience is the sole judge, they must allow us to make them fully acquainted with him whom kings regarded as an assassin, judges as a fanatic, and the youth of Germany as a hero. Charles Louis Sand was born on the 5th of October, 1795, at Wonsiedel, in the Fichtel Wald; he was the youngest son of Godfrey Christopher Sand, first

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president and councillor of justice to the King of Prussia, and of Dorothea Jane Wilhelmina Schapf, his wife. Besides two elder brothers, George, who entered upon a commercial career at St. Gall, and Fritz, who was an advocate in the Berlin court of appeal, he had an elder sister named Caroline, and a younger sister called Julia.

While still in the cradle he had been attacked by smallpox of the most malignant type. The virus having spread through all his body, laid bare his ribs, and almost ate away his skull. For several months he lay between life and death; but life at last gained the upper hand. He remained weak and sickly, however, up to his seventh year, at which time a brain fever attacked him, and again put his life in danger. As a compensation, however, this fever, when it left him, seemed to carry away with it all vestiges of his former illness. From that moment his health and strength came into existence; but during these two long illnesses his education had remained very backward, and it was not until the age of eight that he could begin his elementary studies; moreover, his physical sufferings having retarded his intellectual development, he needed to work twice as hard as others to reach the same result.

Seeing the efforts that young Sand made, even while still quite a child, to conquer the defects of

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his organisation, Professor Salfranck, a learned and distinguished man, rector of the Hof gymnasium,[1] conceived such an affection for him, that when, at a later time, he was appointed director of the gymnasium at Ratisbon, he could not part from his pupil, and took him with him. In this town, and at the age of eleven years, he gave the first proof of his courage and humanity. One day, when he was walking with some young friends, he heard cries for help, and ran in that direction: a little boy, eight or nine years old, had just fallen into a pond. Sand immediately, without regarding his best clothes, of which, however, he was very proud, sprang into the water, and, after unheard-of efforts for a child of his age, succeeded in bringing the drowning boy to land.

At the age of twelve or thirteen, Sand, who had become more active, skilful, and determined than many of his elders, often amused himself by giving battle to the lads of the town and of the neighbouring villages. The theatre of these childish conflicts, which in their pale innocence reflected the great battles that were at that time steeping Germany in blood, was generally a plain extending from the town of Wonsiedel to the mountain of St. Catherine, which had ruins at its top, and amid the ruins a

[1] Translator's note.—"Gymnasium" in German means "college."

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tower in excellent preservation. Sand, who was one of the most eager fighters, seeing that his side had several times been defeated on acount of its numerical inferiority, resolved, in order to make up for this drawback, to fortify the tower of St. Catherine, and to retire into it at the next battle if its issue proved unfavourable to him. He communicated this plan to his companions, who received it with enthusiasm. A week was spent, accordingly, in collecting all possible weapons of defence in the tower and in repairing its doors and stairs. These preparations were made so secretly that the army of the enemy had no knowledge of them.

Sunday came: the holidays were the days of battle. Whether because the boys were ashamed of having been beaten last time, or for some other reason, the band to which Sand belonged was even weaker than usual. Sure, however, of a means of retreat, he accepted battle, notwithstanding. The struggle was not a long one; the one party was too weak in numbers to make a prolonged resistance, and began to retire in the best order that could be maintained to St. Catherine's tower, which was reached before much damage had been felt. Having arrived there, some of the combatants ascended to the ramparts, and while the others defended themselves at the foot of the wall, began to shower stones and pebbles upon the conquerors. The latter,

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surprised at the new method of defence which was now for the first time adopted, retreated a little; the rest of the defenders took advantage of the moment to retire into the fortress and shut the door. Great was the astonishment on the part of the besiegers: they had always seen that door broken down, and lo! all at once it was presenting to them a barrier which preserved the besieged from their blows. Three or four went off to find instruments with which to break it down and meanwhile the rest of the attacking force kept the garrison blockaded.

At the end of half an hour the messengers returned not only with levers and picks, but also with a considerable reinforcement composed of lads from the village to which they had been to fetch tools. Then began the assault: Sand and his companions defended themselves desperately; but it was soon evident that, unless help came, the garrison would be forced to capitulate. It was proposed that they should draw lots, and that one of the besieged should be chosen, who in spite of the danger should leave the tower, make his way as best he might through the enemy's army, and go to summon the other lads of Wonsiedel, who had faint-heartedly remained at home. The tale of the peril in which their comrades actually were, the disgrace of a surrender, which would fall upon all of them, would no doubt

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overcome their indolence and induce them to make a diversion that would allow the garrison to attempt a sortie. This suggestion was adopted; but instead of leaving the decision to chance, Sand proposed himself as the messenger. As everybody knew his courage, his skill, and his lightness of foot, the proposition was unanimously accepted, and the new Decius prepared to execute his act of devotion. The deed was not free from danger: there were but two means of egress, one by way of the door, which would lead to the fugitive's falling immediately into the hands of the enemy; the other by jumping from a rampart so high that the enemy had not set a guard there. Sand without a moment's hesitation went to the rampart, where, always religious, even in his childish pleasures, he made a short prayer; then, without fear, without hesitation, with a confidence that was almost superhuman, he sprang to the ground: the distance was twenty-two feet. Sand flew instantly to Wonsiedel, and reached it, although the enemy had despatched their best runners in pursuit. Then the garrison, seeing the success of their enterprise, took fresh courage, and united their efforts against the besiegers, hoping everything from Sand's eloquence, which gave him a great influence over his young companions. And, indeed, in half an hour he was seen reappearing at the head of some thirty boys of his own age, armed

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with slings and crossbows. The besiegers, on the point of being attacked before and behind, recognised the disadvantage of their position and retreated. The victory remained with Sand's party, and all the honours of the day were his.

We have related this anecdote in detail, that our readers may understand from the character of the child what was that of the man. Besides, we shall see him develop, always calm and superior amid small events as amid large ones.

About the same time Sand escaped almost miraculously from two dangers. One day a hod full of plaster fell from a scaffold and broke at his feet. Another day the Prince of Coburg, who during the King of Prussia's stay at the baths of Alexander, was living in the house of Sand's parents, was galloping home with four horses when he came suddenly upon young Karl in a gateway; he could not escape either on the right or the left, without running the risk of being crushed between the wall and the wheels, and the coachman could not, when going at such a pace, hold in his horses: Sand flung himself on his face, and the carriage passed over him without his receiving so much as a single scratch either from the horses or the wheels. From that moment many people regarded him as predestined, and said that the hand of God was upon him.

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Meanwhile political events were developing themselves around the boy, and their seriousness made him a man before the age of manhood. Napoleon weighed upon Germany like another Sennacherib. Staps had tried to play the part of Mutius Scævola, and had died a martyr. Sand was at Hof at that time, and was a student of the gymnasium of which his good tutor Salfranck was the head. He learned that the man whom he regarded as the antichrist was to come and review the troops in that town; he left it at once and went home to his parents, who asked him for what reason he had left the gymnasium.

"Because I could not have been in the same town with Napoleon," he answered, "without trying to kill him, and I do not feel my hand strong enough for that yet."

This happened in 1809; Sand was fourteen years old. Peace, which was signed on the 15th of October, gave Germany some respite, and allowed the young fanatic to resume his studies without being distracted by political considerations; but in 1811 he was occupied by them again, when he learned that the gymnasium was to be dissolved and its place taken by a primary school. To this the rector Salfranck was appointed as a teacher, but instead of the thousand florins which his former appointment brought him, the new one was worth only five

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hundred. Karl could not remain in a primary school where he could not continue his education; he wrote to his mother to announce this event and to tell her with what equanimity the old German philosopher had borne it. Here is the answer of Sand's mother; it will serve to show the character of the woman whose mighty heart never belied itself in the midst of the severest suffering; the answer bears the stamp of that German mysticism of which we have no idea in France:—

"My dear Karl,—You could not have given me a more grievous piece of news than that of the event which has just fallen upon your tutor and father by adoption; nevertheless, terrible though it may be, do not doubt that he will resign himself to it, in order to give to the virtue of his pupils a great example of that submission which every subject owes to the king whom God has set over him. Furthermore, be well assured that in this world there is no other upright and well calculated policy than that which grows out of the old precept, 'Honour God, be just and fear not.' And reflect also that when injustice against the worthy becomes crying, the public voice makes itself heard, and uplifts those who are cast down.

"But if, contrary to all probability, this did not happen,—if God should impose this sublime probation upon the virtue of our friend, if the world were

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to disown him and Providence were to become to that degree his debtor,—yet in that case there are, believe me, supreme compensations: all the things and all the events that occur around us and that act upon us are but machines set in motion by a Higher Hand, so as to complete our education for a higher world, in which alone we shall take our true place. Apply yourself, therefore, my dear child, to watch over yourself unceasingly and always, so that you may not take great and fine isolated actions for real virtue, and may be ready every moment to do all that your duty may require of you. Fundamentally nothing is great, you see, and nothing small, when things are looked at apart from one another, and it is only the putting of things together that produces the unity of evil or of good.

"Moreover, God only sends the trial to the heart where He has put strength, and the manner in which you tell me that your master has borne the misfortune that has befallen him is a fresh proof of this great and eternal truth. You must form yourself upon him, my dear child, and if you are obliged to leave Hof for Bamberg you must resign yourself to it courageously. Man has three educations: that which he receives from his parents, that which circumstances impose upon him, and lastly that which he gives himself; if that misfortune should occur, pray to God that you may yourself worthily com-

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plete that last education, the most important of all.

"I will give you as an example the life and conduct of my father, of whom you have not heard very much, for he died before you were born, but whose mind and likeness are reproduced in you only among all your brothers and sisters. The disastrous fire which reduced his native town to ashes destroyed his fortune and that of his relatives; grief at having lost everything—for the fire broke out in the next house to his—cost his father his life; and while his mother, who for six years had been stretched on a bed of pain, where horrible convulsions held her fast, supported her three little girls by the needlework that she did in the intervals of suffering, he went as a mere clerk into one of the leading mercantile houses of Augsburg, where his lively and yet even temper made him welcome; there he learned a calling, for which, however, he was not naturally adapted, and came back to the home of his birth with a pure and stainless heart, in order to be the support of his mother and his sisters.

"A man can do much when he wishes to do much: join your efforts to my prayers, and leave the rest in the hands of God."

The prediction of this Puritan woman was fulfilled: a little time afterwards rector Salfranck was

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appointed professor at Richembourg, whither Sand followed him; it was there that the events of 1813 found him. In the month of March he wrote to his mother:—

"I can scarcely, dear mother, express to you how calm and happy I begin to feel since I am permitted to believe in the enfranchisement of my country, of which I hear on every side as being so near at hand, —of that country which, in my faith in God, I see beforehand free and mighty, that country for whose happiness I would undergo the greatest sufferings, and even death. Take strength for this crisis. If by chance it should reach our good province, lift your eyes to the Almighty, then carry them back to beautiful rich nature. The goodness of God which preserved and protected so many men during the disastrous Thirty Years' War can do and will do now what it could and did then. As for me, I believe and hope."

Leipzig came to justify Sand's presentiments; then the year 1814 arrived, and he thought Germany free.

On the 10th of December in the same year he left Richembourg with this certificate from his master:—

"Karl Sand belongs to the small number of those elect young men who are distinguished at once by

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the gifts of the mind and the faculties of the soul; in application and work he surpasses all his fellow-students, and this fact explains his rapid progress in all the philosophical and philological sciences; in mathematics only there are still some further studies which he might pursue. The most affectionate wishes of his teacher follow him on his departure.

"J. A. KEYN,

"*Rector, and master of the first class.*

"RICHEMBOURG, *Sept.* 15, 1814"

But it was really the parents of Sand, and in particular his mother, who had prepared the fertile soil in which his teachers had sowed the seeds of learning; Sand knew this well, for at the moment of setting out for the university of Tubingen, where he was about to complete the theological studies necessary for becoming a pastor, as he desired to do, he wrote to them:—

"I confess that, like all my brothers and sisters, I owe to you that beautiful and great part of my education which I have seen to be lacking to most of those around me. Heaven alone can reward you by a conviction of having so nobly and grandly fulfilled your parental duties, amid many others."

After having paid a visit to his brother at St.

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Gall, Sand reached Tübingen, to which he had been principally attracted by the reputation of Eschenmayer; he spent that winter quietly, and no other incident befell than his admission into an association of *Burschen,* called the *Teutonia;* then came Easter of 1815, and with it the terrible news that Napoleon had landed in the Gulf of Juan. Immediately all the youth of Germany able to bear arms gathered once more around the banners of 1813 and 1814. Sand followed the general example; but the action, which in others was an effect of enthusiasm, was in him the result of calm and deliberate resolution. He wrote to Wonsiedel on this occasion:—

"*April* 22, 1813

"My dear Parents,—Until now you have found me submissive to your parental lessons and to the advice of my excellent masters; until now I have made efforts to render myself worthy of the education that God has sent me through you, and have applied myself to become capable of spreading the word of the Lord through my native land; and for this reason I can to-day declare to you sincerely the decision that I have taken, assured that as tender and affectionate parents you will calm yourselves, and as German parents and patriots you will rather praise my resolution than seek to turn me from it.

"The country calls once more for help, and this

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time the call is addressed to me, too, for now I have courage and strength. It cost me a great inward struggle, believe me, to abstain when in 1813 she gave her first cry, and only the conviction held me back that thousands of others were then fighting and conquering for Germany, while I had to live for the peaceful calling to which I was destined. Now it is a question of preserving our newly re-established liberty, which in so many places has already brought in so rich a harvest. The all-powerful and merciful Lord reserves for us this great trial, which will certainly be the last; it is for us, therefore, to show that we are worthy of the supreme gift which He has given us, and capable of upholding it with strength and firmness.

"The danger of the country has never been so great as it is now, that is why, among the youth of Germany, the strong should support the wavering, that all may rise together. Our brave brothers in the north are already assembling from all parts under their banners; the State of Wurtemburg is proclaiming a general levy, and volunteers are coming in from every quarter, asking to die for their country. I consider it my duty, too, to fight for my country and for all the dear ones whom I love. If I were not profoundly convinced of this truth, I should not communicate my resolution to you; but my family is one that has a really German heart,

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and that would consider me as a coward and an unworthy son if I did not follow this impulse. I certainly feel the greatness of the sacrifice; it costs me something, believe me, to leave my beautiful studies and go to put myself under the orders of vulgar, uneducated people, but this only increases my courage in going to secure the liberty of my brothers; moreover, when once that liberty is secured, if God deigns to allow, I will return to carry them His word.

"I take leave, therefore, for a time of you, my most worthy parents, of my brothers, my sisters, and all who are dear to me. As, after mature deliberation, it seems the most suitable thing for me to serve with the Bavarians. I shall get myself enrolled, for as long as the war may last, with a company of that nation. Farewell, then; live happily; far away from you as I shall be, I shall follow your pious exhortations. In this new track I shall still, I hope, remain pure before God, and I shall always try to walk in the path that rises above the things of earth and leads to those of heaven, and perhaps in this career the bliss of saving some souls from their fall may be reserved for me.

"Your dear image will always be about me; I will always have the Lord before my eyes and in my heart, so that I may endure joyfully the pains and fatigues of this holy war. Include me in your

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prayers; God will send you the hope of better times to help you in bearing the unhappy time in which we now are. We cannot see one another again soon, unless we conquer; and if we should be conquered (which God forbid!), then my last wish, which I pray you, I conjure you, to fulfil, my last and supreme wish would be that you, my dear and deserving German relatives, should leave an enslaved country for some other not yet under the yoke.

"But why should we thus sadden one another's hearts? Is not our cause just and holy, and is not God just and holy? How then should we not be victors? You see that sometimes I doubt, so, in your letters, which I am impatiently expecting, have pity on me and do not alarm my soul, for in any case we shall meet again in another country, and that one will always be free and happy.

"I am, until death, your dutiful and grateful son,

"KARL SAND."

These two lines of Körner's were written as a postscript:—

> "Perchance above our foeman lying dead
> We may behold the star of liberty."

With this farewell to his parents, and with Körner's poems on his lips, Sand gave up his books, and on the 10th of May we find him in arms among

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the volunteer chasseurs enrolled under the command of Major Falkenhausen, who was at that time at Mannheim; here he found his second brother, who had preceded him, and they underwent all their drill together.

Though Sand was not accustomed to great bodily fatigues, he endured those of the campaign with surprising strength, refusing all the alleviations that his superiors tried to offer him; for he would allow no one to outdo him in the trouble that he took for the good of the country. On the march he invariably shared anything that he possessed fraternally with his comrades, helping those who were weaker than himself to carry their burdens, and, at once priest and soldier, sustaining them by his words when he was powerless to do anything more.

On the 18th of June, at eight o'clock in the evening, he arrived upon the field of battle at Waterloo. On the 14th of July he entered Paris.

On the 18th of December, 1815, Karl Sand and his brother were back at Wonsiedel, to the great joy of their family. He spent the Christmas holidays and the end of the year with them, but his ardour for his new vocation did not allow him to remain longer, and on the 7th of January he reached Erlangen. Then, to make up for lost time, he resolved to subject his day to fixed and uniform rules, and to

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write down every evening what he had done since the morning. It is by the help of this journal that we are able to follow the young enthusiast, not only in all the actions of his life, but also in all the thoughts of his mind and all the hesitations of his conscience. In it we find his whole self, simple to naïveté, enthusiastic to madness, gentle even to weakness towards others, severe even to asceticism towards himself. One of his great griefs was the expense that his education occasioned to his parents, and every useless and costly pleasure left a remorse in his heart. Thus, on the 9th of February 1816, he wrote:—

"I meant to go and visit my parents. Accordingly I went to the *Commers-haus*, and there I was much amused. N. and T. began upon me with the everlasting jokes about Wonsiedel; that went on until eleven o'clock. But afterwards N. and T. began to torment me to go to the wine-shop; I refused as long as I could. But as, at last, they seemed to think that it was from contempt of them that I would not go and drink a glass of Rhine wine with them, I did not dare resist longer. Unfortunately, they did not stop at Braunberger; and while my glass was still half full, N. ordered a bottle of champagne. When the first had disappeared, T. ordered a second; then, even before this second bottle was

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drunk, both of them ordered a third in my name and in spite of me. I returned home quite giddy, and threw myself on the sofa, where I slept for about an hour, and only went to bed afterwards.

"Thus passed this shameful day, in which I have not thought enough of my kind and worthy parents, who are leading a poor and hard life, and in which I suffered myself to be led away by the example of people who have money into spending four florins —an expenditure which was useless, and which would have kept the whole family for two days. Pardon me, my God, pardon me, I beseech Thee, and receive the vow that I make never to fall into the same fault again. In future I will live even more abstemiously than I usually do, so as to repair the fatal traces in my poor cash-box of my extravagance, and not to be obliged to ask money of my mother before the day when she thinks of sending me some herself."

Then, at the very time when the poor young man reproaches himself as if with a crime with having spent four florins, one of his cousins, a widow, dies and leaves three orphan children. He runs immediately to carry the first consolations to the unhappy little creatures, entreats his mother to take charge of the youngest, and overjoyed at her answer, thanks her thus:—

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"For the very keen joy that you have given me by your letter, and for the very dear tone in which your soul speaks to me, bless you, O my mother! As I might have hoped and been sure, you have taken little Julius, and that fills me afresh with the deepest gratitude towards you, the rather that, in my constant trust in your goodness, I had already in her lifetime given our good little cousin the promise that you are fulfilling for me after her death."

About March, Sand, though he did not fall ill, had an indisposition that obliged him to go and take the waters; his mother happened at the time to be at the ironworks of Redwitz, some twelve or fifteen miles from Wonsiedel, where the mineral springs are found. Sand established himself there with his mother, and notwithstanding his desire to avoid interrupting his work, the time taken up by baths, by invitations to dinners, and even by the walks which his health required, disturbed the regularity of his usual existence and awakened his remorse. Thus we find these lines written in his journal for April 13th:—

"Life, without some high aim towards which all thoughts and actions tend, is an empty desert: my day yesterday is a proof of this; I spent it with my own people, and that, of course, was a great pleas-

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ure to me; but how did I spend it? In continual eating, so that when I wanted to work I could do nothing worth doing. Full of indolence and slackness, I dragged myself into the company of two or three sets of people, and came from them in the same state of mind as I went to them."

For these expeditions Sand made use of a little chestnut horse which belonged to his brother, and of which he was very fond. This little horse had been bought with great difficulty; for, as we have said, the whole family was poor. The following note, in relation to the animal, will give an idea of Sand's simplicity of heart:—

"*19th April*

"To-day I have been very happy at the iron-works, and very industrious beside my kind mother. In the evening I came home on the little chestnut. Since the day before yesterday, when he got a strain and hurt his foot, he has been very restive and very touchy, and when he got home he refused his food. I thought at first that he did not fancy his fodder, and gave him some pieces of sugar and sticks of cinnamon, which he likes very much; he tasted them, but would not eat them. The poor little beast seems to have some other internal indisposition besides his injured foot. If by ill luck he were to become foundered or ill, everybody, even my parents,

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would throw the blame on me, and yet I have been very careful and considerate of him. My God, my Lord, Thou who canst do things both great and small, remove from me this misfortune, and let him recover as quickly as possible. If, however, Thou hast willed otherwise, and if this fresh trouble is to fall upon us, I will try to bear it with courage, and as the expiation of some sin. Meanwhile, O my God, I leave this matter in Thy hands, as I leave my life and my soul."

On the 20th of April he wrote:—

"The little horse is well; God has helped me."

German manners and customs are so different from ours, and contrasts occur so frequently in the same man, on the other side of the Rhine, that anything less than all the quotations which we have given would have been insufficient to place before our readers a true idea of that character made up of artlessness and reason, childishness and strength, depression and enthusiasm, material details and poetic ideas, which renders Sand a man incomprehensible to us. We will now continue the portrait, which still wants a few finishing touches.

When he returned to Erlangen, after the completion of his "cure," Sand read *Faust* for the first time. At first he was amazed at that work, which

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seemed to him an orgy of genius; then, when he had entirely finished it, he reconsidered his first impression, and wrote:—

"*4th May*

"Oh, horrible struggle of man and devil! What Mephistopheles is in me I feel for the first time in this hour, and I feel it, O God, with consternation!

"About eleven at night I finished reading the tragedy, and I felt and saw the fiend in myself, so that by midnight, amid my tears and despair, I was at last frightened at myself."

Sand was falling by degrees into a deep melancholy, from which nothing could rouse him except his desire to purify and preach morality to the students around him. To anyone who knows university life such a task will seem superhuman. Sand, however, was not discouraged, and if he could not gain an influence over everyone, he at least succeeded in forming around him a considerable circle of the most intelligent and the best; nevertheless, in the midst of these apostolic labours strange longings for death would overcome him; he seemed to recall heaven and want to return to it; he called these temptations "homesickness for the soul's country."

His favourite authors were Lessing, Schiller, Herder, and Goethe; after re-reading the two last for the twentieth time, this is what he wrote:—

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"Good and evil touch each other; the woes of the young Werther and Weisslingen's seduction are almost the same story; no matter, we must not judge between what is good and what is evil in others; for that is what God will do. I have just been spending much time over this thought, and have become convinced that in no circumstances ought we to allow ourselves to seek for the devil in others, and that we have no right to judge; the only creature over whom we have received the power to judge and condemn is ourself, and that gives us enough constant care, business, and trouble.

"I have again to-day felt a profound desire to quit this world and enter a higher world; but this desire is rather dejection than strength, a lassitude than an upsoaring."

The year 1816 was spent by Sand in these pious attempts upon his young comrades, in this ceaseless self-examination, and in the perpetual battle which he waged with the desire for death that pursued him; every day he had deeper doubts of himself, and on the 1st of January, 1817, he wrote this prayer in his diary:—

"Grant to me, O Lord, to me whom Thou hast endowed, in sending me on earth, with free will, the grace that in this year which we are now beginning I may never relax this constant attention, and not

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shamefully give up the examination of my conscience which I have hitherto made. Give me strength to increase the attention which I turn upon my own life, and to diminish that which I turn upon the life of others; strengthen my will that it may become powerful to command the desires of the body and the waverings of the soul; give me a pious conscience entirely devoted to Thy celestial kingdom, that I may always belong to Thee, or after failing, may be able to return to Thee."

Sand was right in praying to God for the year 1817, and his fears were a presentiment: the skies of Germany, lightened by Leipzig and Waterloo, were once more darkened; to the colossal and universal despotism of Napoleon succeeded the individual oppression of those little princes who made up the Germanic Diet, and all that the nations had gained by overthrowing the giant was to be governed by dwarfs. This was the time when secret societies were organised throughout Germany; let us say a few words about them, for the history that we are writing is not only that of individuals, but also that of nations, and every time that occasion presents itself we will give our little picture a wide horizon.

The secret societies of Germany, of which, without knowing them, we have all heard, seem, when

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we follow them up, like rivers, to originate in some sort of affiliation to those famous clubs of the *illuminés* and the freemasons which made so much stir in France at the close of the eighteenth century. At the time of the revolution of '89 these different philosophical, political, and religious sects enthusiastically accepted the republican doctrines, and the successes of our first generals have often been attributed to the secret efforts of the members. When Bonaparte, who was acquainted with these groups, and was even said to have belonged to them, exchanged his general's uniform for an emperor's cloak, all of them, considering him as a renegade and traitor, not only rose against him at home, but tried to raise enemies against him abroad; as they addressed themselves to noble and generous passions, they found a response, and princes to whom their results might be profitable seemed for a moment to encourage them. Among others, Prince Louis of Prussia was grandmaster of one of these societies.

The attempted murder by Staps, to which we have already referred, was one of the thunderclaps of the storm; but its morrow brought the peace of Vienna, and the degradation of Austria was the death-blow of the old Germanic organisation. These societies, which had received a mortal wound in 1806 and were now controlled by the French police,

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instead of continuing to meet in public, were forced to seek new members in the dark. In 1811 several agents of these societies were arrested in Berlin, but the Prussian authorities, following secret orders of Queen Louisa, actually protected them, so that they were easily able to deceive the French police about their intentions. About February 1815 the disasters of the French army revived the courage of these societies, for it was seen that God was helping their cause: the students in particular joined enthusiastically in the new attempts that were now begun; many colleges enrolled themselves almost entire, and chose their principals and professors as captains; the poet Körner, killed on the 18th of October at Liepzig, was the hero of this campaign.

The triumph of this national movement, which twice carried the Prussian army—largely composed of volunteers—to Paris, was followed, when the treaties of 1815 and the new Germanic constitution were made known, by a terrible reaction in Germany. All these young men who, exiled by their princes, had risen in the name of liberty, soon perceived that they had been used as tools to establish European despotism; they wished to claim the promises that had been made, but the policy of Talleyrand and Metternich weighed on them, and repressing them at the first words they uttered, compelled them to shelter their discontent and their hopes in the uni-

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versities, which, enjoying a kind of constitution of their own, more easily escaped the investigations made by the spies of the Holy Alliance; but, repressed as they were, these societies continued nevertheless to exist, and kept up communications by means of travelling students, who, bearing verbal messages, traversed Germany under the pretence of botanising, and, passing from mountain to mountain, sowed broadcast those luminous and hopeful words of which peoples are always greedy and kings always fear.

We have seen that Sand, carried away by the general movement, had gone through the campaign of 1815 as a volunteer, although he was then only nineteen years old. On his return, he, like others, had found his golden hopes deceived, and it is from this period that we find his journal assuming the tone of mysticism and sadness which our readers must have remarked in it. He soon entered one of these associations, the *Teutonia;* and from that moment, regarding the great cause which he had taken up as a religious one, he attempted to make the conspirators worthy of their enterprise, and thus arose his attempts to inculcate moral doctrines, in which he succeeded with some, but failed with the majority. Sand had succeeded, however, in forming around him a certain circle of Puritans, composed of about sixty to eighty students, all belonging to

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the group of the *Burschenschaft* which continued its political and religious course despite all the jeers of the opposing group—the *Landmannschaft*. One of his friends called Dittmar and he were pretty much the chiefs, and although no election had given them their authority, they exercised so much influence upon what was decided that in any particular case their fellow-adepts were sure spontaneously to obey any impulse that they might choose to impart. The meetings of the *Burschen* took place upon a little hill crowned by a ruined castle, which was situated at some distance from Erlangen, and which Sand and Dittmar had called the Ruttli, in memory of the spot where Walter Fürst, Melchthal, and Stauffacher had made their vow to deliver their country; there, under the pretence of students' games, while they built up a new house with the ruined fragments, they passed alternately from symbol to action and from action to symbol.

Meanwhile the association was making such advances throughout Germany that not only the princes and kings of the German confederation, but also the great European powers, began to be uneasy. France sent agents to bring home reports, Russia paid agents on the spot, and the persecutions that touched a professor and exasperated a whole university often arose from a note sent by the Cabinet of the Tuileries or of St. Petersburg.

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It was amid the events that began thus that Sand, after commending himself to the protection of God, began the year 1817, in the sad mood in which we have just seen him, and in which he was kept rather by a disgust for things as they were than by a disgust for life. On the 8th of May, preyed upon by this melancholy, which he cannot conquer, and which comes from the disappointment of all his political hopes, he writes in his diary:—

"I shall find it impossible to set seriously to work, and this idle temper, this humour of hypochondria which casts its black veil over everything in life, continues and grows in spite of the moral activity which I imposed on myself yesterday."

In the holidays, fearing to burden his parents with any additional expense, he will not go home, and prefers to make a walking tour with his friends. No doubt this tour, in addition to its recreative side, had a political aim. Be that as it may, Sand's diary, during the period of his journey, shows nothing but the names of the towns through which he passed. That we may have a notion of Sand's dutifulness to his parents, it should be said that he did not set out until he had obtained his mother's permission. On their return, Sand, Dittmar, and their friends the *Burschen,* found their Ruttli sacked by their enemies

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of the *Landmannschaft*; the house that they had built was demolished and its fragments dispersed. Sand took this event for an omen, and was greatly depressed by it.

"It seems to me, O my God!" he says in his journal, "that everything swims and turns around me. My soul grows darker and darker; my moral strength grows less instead of greater; I work and cannot achieve; walk towards my aim and do not reach it; exhaust myself, and do nothing great. The days of life flee one after another; cares and uneasiness increase; I see no haven anywhere for our sacred German cause. The end will be that we shall fall, for I myself waver. O Lord and Father! protect me, save me, and lead me to that land from which we are for ever driven back by the indifference of wavering spirits."

About this time a terrible event struck Sand to the heart; his friend Dittmar was drowned. This is what he wrote in his diary on the very morning of the occurrence:—

"Oh, almighty God! What is going to become of me? For the last fortnight I have been drawn into disorder, and have not been able to compel myself to look fixedly either backward or forward in my life, so that from the 4th of June up to the present hour my journal has remained empty. Yet

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every day I might have had occasion to praise Thee, O my God, but my soul is in anguish. Lord, do not turn from me; the more are the obstacles the more need is there of strength."

In the evening he added these few words to the lines that he had written in the morning:—

"Desolation, despair, and death over my friend, over my very deeply loved Dittmar."

This letter which he wrote to his family contains the account of the tragic event:—

"You know that when my best friends, A., C., and Z., were gone, I became particularly intimate with my well-beloved Dittmar of Anspach; Dittmar, that is to say a true and worthy German, an evangelical Christian, something more, in short, than a man! An angelic soul, always turned toward the good, serene, pious, and ready for action; he had come to live in a room next to mine in Professor Grunler's house; we loved each other, upheld each other in our efforts, and, well or ill, bore our good or evil fortune in common. On this last spring evening, after having worked in his room and having strengthened ourselves anew to resist all the torments of life and to advance towards the aim that

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we desired to attain, we went, about seven in the evening, to the baths of Redwitz. A very black storm was rising in the sky, but only as yet appeared on the horizon. E., who was with us, proposed to go home, but Dittmar persisted, saying that the canal was but a few steps away. God permitted that it should not be I who replied with these fatal words. So he went on. The sunset was splendid: I see it still; its violet clouds all fringed with gold, for I remember the smallest details of that evening.

"Dittmar went down first; he was the only one of us who knew how to swim; so he walked before us to show us the depth. The water was about up to our chests, and he, who preceded us, was up to his shoulders, when he warned us not to go farther, because he was ceasing to feel the bottom. He immediately gave up his footing and began to swim, but scarcely had he made ten strokes when, having reached the place where the river separates into two branches, he uttered a cry, and as he was trying to get a foothold, disappeared. We ran at once to the bank, hoping to be able to help him more easily; but we had neither poles nor ropes within reach, and, as I have told you, neither of us could swim. Then we called for help with all our might. At that moment Dittmar reappeared, and by an unheard-of effort seized the end of a willow branch that was hanging over the water; but the branch was not

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strong enough to resist, and our friend sank again, as though he had been struck by apoplexy. Can you imagine the state in which we were, we his friends, bending over the river, our fixed and haggard eyes trying to pierce its depth? My God, my God! how was it we did not go mad?

"A great crowd, however, had run at our cries. For two hours they sought for him with boats and drag-hooks; and at last they succeeded in drawing his body from the gulf. Yesterday we bore it solemnly to the field of rest.

"Thus with the end of this spring has begun the serious summer of my life. I greeted it in a grave and melancholy mood, and you behold me now, if not consoled, at least strengthened by religion, which, thanks to the merits of Christ, gives me the assurance of meeting my friend in heaven, from the heights of which he will inspire me with strength to support the trials of this life; and now I do not desire anything more except to know you free from all anxiety in regard to me."

Instead of serving to unite the two groups of students in a common grief, this accident, on the contrary, did but intensify their hatred of each other. Among the first persons who ran up at the cries of Sand and his companion was a member of the *Landmannschaft* who could swim, but instead of going

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to Dittmar's assistance he exclaimed, "It seems that we shall get rid of one of these dogs of *Burschen;* thank God!" Notwithstanding this manifestation of hatred, which, indeed, might be that of an individual and not of the whole body, the *Burschen* invited their enemies to be present at Dittmar's funeral. A brutal refusal, and a threat to disturb the ceremony by insults to the corpse, formed their sole reply. The *Burschen* then warned the authorities, who took suitable measures, and all Dittmar's friends followed his coffin sword in hand. Beholding this calm but resolute demonstration, the *Landmannschaft* did not dare to carry out their threat, and contented themselves with insulting the procession by laughs and songs.

Sand wrote in his journal:—

"Dittmar is a great loss to all of us, and particularly to me; he gave me the overflow of his strength and life; he stopped, as it were, with an embankment, the part of my character that is irresolute and undecided. From him it is that I have learned not to dread the approaching storm, and to know how to fight and die."

Some days after the funeral Sand had a quarrel about Dittmar with one of his former friends, who had passed over from the *Burschen* to the *Land-*

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mannschaft, and who had made himself conspicuous at the time of the funeral by his indecent hilarity. It was decided that they should fight the next day, and on the same day Sand wrote in his journal:—

"To-morrow I am to fight with P. G.; yet Thou knowest, O my God, what great friends we formerly were, except for a certain mistrust with which his coldness always inspired me; but on this occasion his odious conduct has caused me to descend from the tenderest pity to the profoundest hatred.

"My God, do not withdraw Thy hand either from him or from me, since we are both fighting like men! Judge only by our two causes, and give the victory to that which is the more just. If Thou shouldst call me before Thy supreme tribunal, I know very well that I should appear burdened with an eternal malediction; and indeed it is not upon myself that I reckon but upon the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

"Come what may, be praised and blessed, O my God!

"My dear parents, brothers, and friends, I commend you to the protection of God."

Sand waited in vain for two hours next day: his adversary did not come to the meeting-place.

The loss of Dittmar, however, by no means pro-

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duced the result upon Sand that might have been expected, and that he himself seems to indicate in the regrets he expressed for him. Deprived of that strong soul upon which he rested, Sand understood that it was his task by redoubled energy to make the death of Dittmar less fatal to his party. And indeed he continued singly the work of drawing in recruits which they had been carrying on together, and the patriotic conspiracy was not for a moment impeded.

The holidays came, and Sand left Erlangen to return no more. From Wonsiedel he was to proceed to Jena, in order to complete his theological studies there. After some days spent with his family, and indicated in his journal as happy, Sand went to his new place of abode, where he arrived some time before the festival of the Wartburg. This festival, established to celebrate the anniversary of the battle of Leipzig, was regarded as a solemnity throughout Germany, and although the princes well knew that it was a centre for the annual renewal of affiliation to the various societies, they dared not forbid it. Indeed, the manifesto of the Teutonic Association was exhibited at this festival and signed by more than two thousand deputies from different universities in Germany. This was a day of joy for Sand; for he found in the midst of new friends a great number of old ones.

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The Government, however, which had not dared to attack the Association by force, resolved to undermine it by opinion. M. de Stauren published a terrible document, attacking the societies, and founded, it was said, upon information furnished by Kotzebue. This publication made a great stir, not only at Jena, but throughout all Germany. Here is the trace of this event that we find in Sand's journal:—

"*24th November*

"To-day, after working with much ease and assiduity, I went out about four with E. As we crossed the market-place we heard Kotzebue's new and venomous insult read. By what a fury that man is possessed against the *Burschen* and against all who love Germany!"

Thus for the first time and in these terms Sand's journal presents the name of the man who, eighteen months later, he was to slay.

On the 29th, in the evening, Sand writes again:—

"To-morrow I shall set out courageously and joyfully from this place for a pilgrimage to Wonsiedel; there I shall find my large-hearted mother and my tender sister Julia; there I shall cool my head and warm my heart. Probably I shall be present at my good Fritz's marriage with Louisa, and at the bap-

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tism of my very dear Durchmith's first-born. God, O my Father, as Thou hast been with me during my sad course, be with me still on my happy road."

This journey did in fact greatly cheer Sand. Since Dittmar's death his attacks of hypochondria had disappeared. While Dittmar lived he might die; Dittmar being dead, it was his part to live.

On the 11th of December he left Wonsiedel, to return to Jena, and on the 31st of the same month he wrote this prayer in his journal:—

"O merciful Saviour! I began this year with prayer, and in these last days I have been subject to distraction and ill-disposed. When I look backward, I find, alas! that I have not become better; but I have entered more profoundly into life, and, should occasion present, I now feel strength to act.

"It is because Thou hast always been with me, Lord, even when I was not with Thee."

If our readers have followed with some attention the different extracts from the journal that we have placed before them, they must have seen Sand's resolution gradually growing stronger and his brain becoming excited. From the beginning of the year 1818, one feels his view, which long was timid and wandering, taking in a wider horizon and fixing itself on a nobler aim. He is no longer ambitious of

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the pastor's simple life or of the narrow influence which he might gain in a little community, and which, in his juvenile modesty, had seemed the height of good fortune and happiness; it is now his native land, his German people, nay, all humanity, which he embraces in his gigantic plans of political regeneration. Thus, on the flyleaf of his journal for the year 1818, he writes:—

"Lord, let me strengthen myself in the idea that I have conceived of the deliverance of humanity by the holy sacrifice of Thy Son. Grant that I may be a Christ of Germany, and that, like and through Jesus, I may be strong and patient in suffering."

But the anti-republican pamphlets of Kotzebue increased in number and gained a fatal influence upon the minds of rulers. Nearly all the persons who were attacked in these pamphlets were known and esteemed at Jena; and it may easily be comprehended what effects were produced by such insults upon these young heads and noble hearts, which carried conviction to the point of blindness and enthusiasm to that of fanaticism.

Thus, here is what Sand wrote in his diary on the 5th of May:—

"Lord, what causes this melancholy anguish which has again taken possession of me? But a firm and

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constant will surmounts everything, and the idea of the country gives joy and courage to the saddest and the weakest. When I think of that, I am always amazed that there is none among us found courageous enough to drive a knife into the breast of Kotzebue or of any other traitor."

Still dominated by the same thought, he continues thus on the 18th of May:—

"A man is nothing in comparison with a nation; he is a unity compared with millions, a minute compared with a century. A man, whom nothing precedes and nothing follows, is born, lives, and dies in a longer or shorter time, which, relatively to eternity, hardly equals the duration of a lightning flash. A nation, on the contrary, is immortal."

From time to time, however, amid these thoughts that bear the impress of that political fatality which was driving him towards the deed of bloodshed, the kindly and joyous youth reappears. On the 24th of June he writes to his mother:—

"I have received your long and beautiful letter, accompanied by the very complete and well-chosen outfit which you send me. The sight of this fine linen gave me back one of the joys of my childhood.

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These are fresh benefits. My prayers never remain unfulfilled, and I have continual cause to thank you and God. I receive, all at once, shirts, two pairs of fine sheets, a present of your work, and of Julia's and Caroline's work, dainties and sweetmeats, so that I am still jumping with joy and I turned three times on my heels when I opened the little parcel. Receive the thanks of my heart, and share, as giver, in the joy of him who has received.

"To-day, however, is a very serious day, the last day of spring and the anniversary of that on which I lost my noble and good Dittmar. I am a prey to a thousand different and confused feelings; but I have only two passions left in me which remain upright and like two pillars of brass support this whole chaos —the thought of God and the love of my country."

During all this time Sand's life remains apparently calm and equal; the inward storm is calmed; he rejoices in his application to work and his cheerful temper. However, from time to time, he makes great complaints to himself of his propensity to love dainty food, which he does not always find it possible to conquer. Then, in his self-contempt, he calls himself "fig-stomach" or "cake-stomach." But amid all this the religious and political exaltation continues. He makes a propagandist journey with his friends to Leipzig, to Wittemberg, and to Berlin,

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and visits all the battlefields near to the road that he follows. On the 18th of October he is back at Jena, where he resumes his studies with more application than ever. It is among such university studies that the year 1818 closes for him, and we should hardly suspect the terrible resolution which he has taken, were it not that we find in his journal this last note, dated the 31st of December:—

"I finish the last day of this year 1818, then, in a serious and solemn mood, and I have decided that the Christmas feast which has just gone by will be the last Christmas feast that I shall celebrate. If anything is to come of our efforts, if the cause of humanity is to assume the upper hand in our country, if in this faithless epoch any noble feelings can spring up afresh and make way, it can only happen if the wretch, the traitor, the seducer of youth, the infamous Kotzebue, falls! I am fully convinced of this, and until I have accomplished the work upon which I have resolved, I shall have no rest. Lord, Thou who knowest that I have devoted my life to this great action, I only need, now that it is fixed in my mind, to beg of Thee true firmness and courage of soul."

Here Sand's diary ends; he had begun it to strengthen himself; he had reached his aim; he

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needed nothing more. From this moment he was occupied by nothing but this single idea, and he continued slowly to mature the plan in his head in order to familiarise himself with its execution; but all the impressions arising from this thought remained in his own mind, and none was manifested on the surface. To everyone else he was the same; but for some little time past, a complete and unaltered serenity, accompanied by a visible and cheerful return of inclination towards life, had been noticed in him. He had made no change in the hours or the duration of his studies; but he had begun to attend the anatomical classes very assiduously. One day he was seen to give even more than his customary attention to a lesson in which the professor was demonstrating the various functions of the heart; he examined with the greatest care the place occupied by it in the chest, asking to have some of the demonstrations repeated two or three times, and when he went out, questioning some of the young men who were following the medical courses, about the susceptibility of the organ, which cannot receive ever so slight a blow without death ensuing from that blow: all this with so perfect an indifference and calmness that no one about him conceived any suspicion.

Another day, A. S., one of his friends, came into his room. Sand, who had heard him coming up, was standing by the table, with a paper-knife in his

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hand, waiting for him; directly the visitor came in, Sand flung himself upon him, struck him lightly on the forehead, and then, as he put up his hands to ward off the blow, struck him rather more violently in the chest; then, satisfied with this experiment, said—

"You see, when you want to kill a man, that is the way to do it; you threaten the face, he puts up his hands, and while he does so you thrust a dagger into his heart."

The two young men laughed heartily over this murderous demonstration, and A. S. related it that evening at the wine-shop as one of the peculiarities of character that were common in his friend. After the event, the pantomime explained itself.

The month of March arrived. Sand became day by day calmer, more affectionate, and kinder; it might be thought that in the moment of leaving his friends for ever he wished to leave them an ineffaceable remembrance of him. At last he announced that on account of several family affairs he was about to undertake a little journey, and set about all his preparations with his usual care, but with a serenity never previously seen in him. Up to that time he had continued to work as usual, not relaxing for an instant; for there was a possibility that Kotzebue might die or be killed by somebody else before the term that Sand had fixed to himself, and in that case he did not wish to have lost time. On the 7th

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of March he invited all his friends to spend the evening with him, and announced his departure for the next day but one, the 9th. All of them then proposed to him to escort him for some leagues, but Sand refused; he feared lest this demonstration, innocent though it were, might compromise them later on. He set forth alone, therefore, after having hired his lodgings for another half-year, in order to obviate any suspicion, and went by way of Erfurt and Eisenach, in order to visit the Wartburg. From that place he went to Frankfort, where he slept on the 17th, and on the morrow he continued his journey by way of Darmstadt. At last, on the 23rd, at nine in the morning, he arrived at the top of the little hill where we found him at the beginning of this narrative. Throughout the journey he had been the amiable and happy young man whom no one could see without liking.

Having reached Mannheim, he took a room at the Weinberg, and wrote his name as "Henry" in the visitors' list. He immediately inquired where Kotzebue lived. The councillor dwelt near the church of the Jesuits; his house was at the corner of a street, and though Sand's informants could not tell him exactly the letter, they assured him it was not possible to mistake the house.[1]

[1] At Mannheim houses are marked by letters, not by numbers.

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Sand went at once to Kotzebue's house: it was about ten o'clock; he was told that the councillor went to walk for an hour or two every morning in the park of Mannheim. Sand inquired about the path in which he generally walked, and about the clothes he wore, for never having seen him he could only recognise him by the description. Kotzebue chanced to take another path. Sand walked about the park for an hour, but seeing no one who corresponded to the description given him, went back to the house.

Kotzebue had come in, but was at breakfast and could not see him.

Sand went back to the Weinberg, and sat down to the midday *table d'hote*, where he dined with an appearance of such calmness, and even of such happiness, that his conversation, which was now lively, now simple, and now dignified, was remarked by everybody. At five in the afternoon he returned a third time to the house of Kotzebue, who was giving a great dinner that day; but orders had been given to admit Sand. He was shown into a little room opening out of the anteroom, and a moment after, Kotzebue came in.

Sand then performed the drama which he had rehearsed upon his friend A. S. Kotzebue, finding his face threatened, put his hands up to it, and left his breast exposed; Sand at once stabbed him to the

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heart; Kotzebue gave one cry, staggered, and fell back into an arm-chair: he was dead.

At the cry a little girl of six years old ran in, one of those charming German children, with the faces of cherubs, blue-eyed, with long flowing hair. She flung herself upon the body of Kotzebue, calling her father with piercing cries. Sand, standing at the door, could not endure this sight, and without going farther, he thrust the dagger, still covered with Kotzebue's blood, up to the hilt into his own breast. Then, seeing to his surprise that notwithstanding the terrible wound he had just given himself he did not feel the approach of death, and not wishing to fall alive into the hands of the servants who were running in, he rushed to the staircase. The persons who were invited were just coming in; they, seeing a young man, pale and bleeding with a knife in his breast, uttered loud cries, and stood aside, instead of stopping him. Sand therefore passed down the staircase and reached the street below; ten paces off, a patrol was passing, on the way to relieve the sentinels at the castle; Sand thought these men had been summoned by the cries that followed him; he threw himself on his knees in the middle of the street, and said, "Father, receive my soul!"

Then, drawing the knife from the wound, he gave himself a second blow below the former, and fell insensible.

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Sand was carried to the hospital and guarded with the utmost strictness; the wounds were serious, but, thanks to the skill of the physicians who were called in, were not mortal; one of them even healed eventually; but as to the second, the blade having gone between the costal pleura and the pulmonary pleura, an effusion of blood occurred between the two layers, so that, instead of closing the wound, it was kept carefully open, in order that the blood extravasated during the night might be drawn off every morning by means of a pump, as is done in the operation for empyæmia.

Notwithstanding these cares, Sand was for three months between life and death.

When, on the 26th of March, the news of Kotzebue's assassination came from Mannheim to Jena, the academic senate caused Sand's room to be opened, and found two letters—one addressed to his friends of the *Burschenschaft*, in which he declared that he no longer belonged to their society, since he did not wish that their brotherhood should include a man about to die on the scaffold. The other letter, which bore this superscription, "To my nearest and dearest," was an exact account of what he meant to do, and the motives which had made him determine upon this act. Though the letter is a little long, it is so solemn and so antique in spirit, that we do not hesitate to present it in its entirety to our readers:—

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"To all my own

"Loyal and eternally cherished souls:

"Why add still further to your sadness? I asked myself, and I hesitated to write to you; but my silence would have wounded the religion of the heart; and the deeper a grief the more it needs, before it can be blotted out, to drain to the dregs its cup of bitterness. Forth from my agonised breast, then; forth, long and cruel torment of a last conversation, which alone, however, when sincere, can alleviate the pain of parting.

"This letter brings you the last farewell of your son and your brother.

"The greatest misfortune of life for any generous heart is to see the cause of God stopped short in its developments by our fault; and the most dishonouring infamy would be to suffer that the fine things acquired bravely by thousands of men, and for which thousands of men have joyfully sacrificed themselves, should be no more than a transient dream, without real and positive consequences. The resurrection of our German life was begun in these last twenty years, and particularly in the sacred year 1813, with a courage inspired by God. But now the house of our fathers is shaken from the summit to the base. Forward! let us raise it, new and fair, and such as the true temple of the true God should be.

"Small is the number of those who resist, and

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who wish to oppose themselves as a dyke against the torrent of the progress of higher humanity among the German people. Why should vast whole masses bow beneath the yoke of a perverse minority? And why, scarcely healed, should we fall back into a worse disease than that which we are leaving behind?

"Many of these seducers, and those are the most infamous, are playing the game of corruption with us; among them is Kotzebue, the most cunning and the worst of all, a real talking machine emitting all sorts of detestable speech and pernicious advice. His voice is skillful in removing from us all anger and bitterness against the most unjust measures, and is just such as kings require to put us to sleep again in that old hazy slumber which is the death of nations. Every day he odiously betrays his country, and nevertheless, despite his treason, remains an idol for half Germany, which, dazzled by him, accepts unresisting the poison poured out by him in his periodic pamphlets, wrapped up and protected as he is by the seductive mantle of a great poetic reputation. Incited by him, the princes of Germany, who have forgotten their promises, will allow nothing free or good to be accomplished; or if anything of the kind is accomplished in spite of them, they will league themselves with the French to annihilate it. That the history of our time may not be covered with eternal ignominy, it is necessary that he should fall.

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"I have always said that if we wish to find a great and supreme remedy for the state of abasement in which we are, none must shrink from combat nor from suffering; and the real liberty of the German people will only be assured when the good citizen sets himself or some other stake upon the game, and when every true son of the country, prepared for the struggle for justice, despises the good things of this world, and only desires those celestial good things which death holds in charge.

"Who then will strike this miserable hireling, this venal traitor?

"I have long been waiting in fear, in prayer, and in tears—I who am not born for murder—for some other to be beforehand with me, to set me free, and suffer me to continue my way along the sweet and peaceful path that I had chosen for myself. Well, despite my prayers and my tears, he who should strike does not present himself; indeed, every man, like myself, has a right to count upon some other, and everyone thus counting, every hour's delay, but makes our state worse; for at any moment —and how deep a shame would that be for us!— Kotzebue may leave Germany, unpunished, and go to devour in Russia the treasures for which he has exchanged his honour, his conscience, and his German name. Who can preserve us from this shame, if every man, if I myself, do not feel strength to

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make myself the chosen instrument of God's justice? Therefore, forward! It shall be I who will courageously rush upon him (do not be alarmed), on him, the loathsome seducer; it shall be I who will kill the traitor, so that his misguiding voice, being extinguished, shall cease to lead us astray from the lessons of history and from the Spirit of God. An irresistible and solemn duty impels me to this deed, ever since I have recognised to what high destinies the German nation may attain during this century, and ever since I have come to know the dastard and hypocrite who alone prevents it from reaching them; for me, as for every German who seeks the public good, this desire has become a strict and binding necessity. May I, by this national vengeance, indicate to all upright and loyal consciences where the true danger lies, and save our vilified and calumniated societies from the imminent danger that threatens them! May I, in short, spread terror among the cowardly and wicked, and courage and faith among the good! Speeches and writings lead to nothing; only actions *work*.

"I will act, therefore; and though driven violently away from my fair dreams of the future, I am none the less full of trust in God; I even experience a celestial joy, now that, like the Hebrews when they sought the promised land, I see traced before me, through darkness and death, that road

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at the end of which I shall have paid my debt to my country.

"Farewell, then, faithful hearts: true, this early separation is hard; true, your hopes, like my wishes, are disappointed; but let us be consoled by the primary thought that we have done what the voice of our country called upon us to do; that, you know, is the principle according to which I have always lived. You will doubtless say among yourselves, 'Yes, thanks to our sacrifices, he had learned to know life and to taste the joys of earth, and he seemed deeply to love his native country and the humble estate to which he was called.' Alas, yes, that is true! Under your protection, and amid your numberless sacrifices, my native land and life had become profoundly dear to me. Yes, thanks to you, I have penetrated into the Eden of knowledge, and have lived the free life of thought; thanks to you, I have looked into history, and have then returned to my own conscience to attach myself to the solid pillars of faith in the Eternal.

"Yes, I was to pass gently through this life as a preacher of the gospel; yes, in my constancy to my calling I was to be sheltered from the storms of this existence. But would that suffice to avert the danger that threatens Germany? And you yourselves, in your infinite love, should you not rather push me on to risk my life for the good of all?

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So many modern Greeks have fallen already to free their country from the yoke of the Turks, and have died almost without any result and without any hope; and yet thousands of fresh martyrs keep up their courage and are ready to fall in their turn; and should I, then, hesitate to die?

"That I do not recognise your love, or that your love is but a trifling consideration with me, you will not believe. What else should impel me to die if not my devotion to you and to Germany, and the need of proving this devotion to my family and my country?

"You, mother, will say, 'Why have I brought up a son whom I loved and who loved me, for whom I have undergone a thousand cares and toils, who, thanks to my prayers and my example, was impressionable to good influences, and from whom, after my long and weary course, I hoped to receive attentions like those which I have given him? Why does he now abandon me?'

"Oh, my kind and tender mother! Yes, you will perhaps say that; but could not the mother of anyone else say the same, and everything go off thus in words when there is need to act for the country? And if no one would act, what would become of that mother of us all who is called Germany?

"But no; such complaints are far from you, you noble woman! I understood your appeal once be-

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fore, and at this present hour, if no one came forward in the German cause, you yourself would urge me to the fight. I have two brothers and two sisters before me, all noble and loyal. They will remain to you, mother; and besides you will have for sons all the children of Germany who love their country.

"Every man has a destiny which he has to accomplish: mine is devoted to the action that I am about to undertake; if I were to live another fifty years, I could not live more happily than I have done lately. Farewell, mother: I commend you to the protection of God; may He raise you to that joy which misfortunes can no longer trouble! Take your grandchildren, to whom I should so much have liked to be a loving friend, to the top of our beautiful mountains soon. There, on that altar raised by the Lord Himself in the midst of Germany, let them devote themselves, swearing to take up the sword as soon as they have strength to lift it, and to lay it down only when our brethren are all united in liberty, when all Germans, having a liberal constitution, are great before the Lord, powerful against their neighbours, and united among themselves.

"May my country ever raise her happy gaze to Thee, Almighty Father! May Thy blessing fall abundantly upon her harvests ready to be cut and her armies ready for battle, and recognising the

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blessings that Thou hast showered upon us, may the German nation ever be first among nations to rise and uphold the cause of humanity, which is Thy image upon earth!

"Your eternally attached son, brother and friend,

"KARL-LUDWIG SAND.

"JENA, *the beginning of March, 1819.*"

Sand, who, as we have said, had at first been taken to the hospital, was removed at the end of three months to the prison at Mannheim, where the governor, Mr. G——, had caused a room to be prepared for him. There he remained two months longer in a state of extreme weakness: his left arm was completely paralysed; his voice was very weak; every movement gave him horrible pain, and thus it was not until the 11th of August—that is to say, five months after the event that we have narrated—that he was able to write to his family the following letter:—

"MY VERY DEAR PARENTS,—The grand-duke's commission of inquiry informed me yesterday that it might be possible I should have the intense joy of a visit from you, and that I might perhaps see you here and embrace you—you, mother, and some of my brothers and sisters.

"Without being surprised at this fresh proof of your motherly love, I have felt an ardent remem-

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brance reawaken of the happy life that we spent gently together. Joy and grief, desire and sacrifice, agitate my heart violently, and I have had to weigh these various impulses one against the other, and with the force of reason, in order to resume mastery of myself and to take a decision in regard to my wishes.

"The balance has inclined in the direction of sacrifice.

"You know, mother, how much joy and courage a look from your eyes, daily intercourse with you, and your pious and high-minded conversation, might bring me during my very short time. But you also know my position, and you are too well acquainted with the natural course of all these painful inquiries, not to feel as I do, that such annoyance, continually recurring, would greatly trouble the pleasure of our companionship, if it did not indeed succeed in entirely destroying it. Then, mother, after the long and fatiguing journey that you would be obliged to make in order to see me, think of the terrible sorrow of the farewell when the moment came to part in this world. Let us therefore abide by the sacrifice, according to God's will, and let us yield ourselves only to that sweet community of thought which distance cannot interrupt, in which I find my only joys, and which, in spite of men, will always be granted us by the Lord, our Father.

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"As for my physical state, I know nothing about it. You see, however, since at last I am writing to you myself, that I have come past my first uncertainties. As for the rest, I know too little of the structure of my own body to give any opinion as to what my wounds may determine for it. Except that a little strength has returned to me, its state is still the same, and I endure it calmly and patiently; for God comes to my help, and gives me courage and firmness. He will help me, believe me, to find all the joys of the soul and to be strong in mind. Amen.

"May you live happy!—Your deeply respectful son, KARL-LUDWIG SAND."

A month after this letter came tender answers from all the family. We will quote only that of Sand's mother, because it completes the idea which the reader may have formed already of this great-hearted woman, as her son always calls her.

"DEAR, INEXPRESSIBLY DEAR KARL,—How sweet it was to me to see the writing of your beloved hand after so long a time! No journey would have been so painful and no road so long as to prevent me from coming to you, and I would go, in deep and infinite love, to any end of the earth in the mere hope of catching sight of you.

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"But, as I well know both your tender affection and your profound anxiety for me, and as you give me, so firmly and upon such manly reflection, reasons against which I can say nothing, and which I can but honour, it shall be, my well-beloved Karl, as you have wished and decided. We will continue, without speech, to communicate our thoughts; but be satisfied, nothing can separate us; I enfold you in my soul, and my material thoughts watch over you.

"May this infinite love which upholds us, strengthens us, and leads us all to a better life, preserve, dear Karl, your courage and firmness.

"Farewell, and be invariably assured that I shall never cease to love you strongly and deeply.

"Your faithful mother, who loves you to eternity."

Sand replied:—

January, 1820, from my isle of Patmos.

"My dear Parents, Brothers, and Sisters,—In the middle of the month of September last year I received, through the grand-duke's special commission of inquiry, whose humanity you have already appreciated, your dear letters of the end of August and the beginning of September, which had such magical influence that they inundated me with joy by transporting me into the inmost circle of your hearts.

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"You, my tender father, you write to me on the sixty-seventh anniversary of your birth, and you bless me by the outpouring of your most tender love.

"You, my well-beloved mother, you deign to promise the continuance of your maternal affection, in which I have at all times constantly believed; and thus I have received the blessings of both of you, which, in my present position, will exercise a more beneficent influence upon me than any of the things that all the kings of the earth, united together, could grant me. Yes, you strengthen me abundantly by your blessed love, and I render thanks to you, my beloved parents, with that respectful submission that my heart will always inculcate as the first duty of a son.

"But the greater your love and the more affectionate your letters, the more do I suffer, I must acknowledge, from the voluntary sacrifice that we have imposed upon ourselves in not seeing one another; and the only reason, my dear parents, why I have delayed to reply to you, was to give myself time to recover the strength which I have lost.

"You too, dear brother-in-law and dear sister, assure me of your sincere and uninterrupted attachment. And yet, after the fright that I have spread among you all, you seem not to know exactly what to think of me; but my heart, full of gratitude for your past kindness, comforts itself; for your actions

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speak and tell me that, even if you wished no longer to love me as I love you, you would not be able to do otherwise. These actions mean more to me at this hour than any possible protestations, nay, than even the tenderest words.

"And you also, my kind brother, you would have consented to hurry with our beloved mother to the shores of the Rhine, to this place where the real links of the soul were welded between us, where we were doubly brothers;[1] but tell me, are you not really here, in thought and in spirit, when I consider the rich fountain of consolation brought me by your cordial and tender letter?

"And you, kind sister-in-law, as you showed yourself from the first, in your delicate tenderness, a true sister, so I find you again at present. There are still the same tender relations, still the same sisterly affection; your consolations, which emanate from a deep and submissive piety, have fallen refreshingly into the depths of my heart. But, dear sister-in-law, I must tell you, as well as the others, that you are too liberal towards me in dispensing your esteem and praises, and your exaggeration has cast me back face to face with my inmost judge, who has shown me in the mirror of my conscience the image of my every weakness.

[1] It was in the neighbourhood of Mannheim that Karl and his brother met under the same banner in 1815.

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She flung herself upon the body of Kotzebue, calling her father with piercing cries.

—p. 1182

From the original illustration by Boulanger

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"You, kind Julia, you desire nothing else but to save me from the fate that awaits me, and you assure me in your own name and in that of you all, that you, like the others, would rejoice to endure it in my place; in that I recognise you fully, and I recognise, too, those sweet and tender relations in which we have been brought up from childhood. Oh, be comforted, dear Julia; thanks to the protection of God, I promise you that it will be easy for me, much easier than I should have thought, to bear what falls to my lot. Receive, then, all of you, my warm and sincere thanks for having thus rejoiced my heart.

"Now that I know from these strengthening letters that, like the prodigal son, the love and goodness of my family are greater on my return than at my departure, I will, as carefully as possible, paint for you my physical and moral state, and I pray God to supplement my words by His strength, so that my letter may contain an equivalent of what yours brought to me, and may help you to reach that state of calm and serenity to which I have myself attained.

"Hardened, by having gained power over myself, against the good and ill of this earth, you know already that of late years I have lived only for moral joys, and I must say that, touched by my efforts, doubtless, the Lord, who is the sacred fount of all that is good, has rendered me apt in seeking them

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and in tasting them to the full. God is ever near me, as formerly, and I find in Him the sovereign principle of the creation of all things; in Him, our holy Father, not only consolation and strength, but an unalterable Friend, full of the holiest love, who will accompany me in all places where I may need His consolations. Assuredly, if He had turned from me, or if I had turned away my eyes from Him, I should now find myself very unfortunate and wretched; but by His grace, on the contrary, lowly and weak creature as I am, He makes me strong and powerful against whatever can befall me.

"What I have hitherto revered as sacred, what I have desired as good, what I have aspired to as heavenly, has in no respect changed now. And I thank God for it, for I should now be in great despair if I were compelled to recognise that my heart had adored deceptive images and enwrapped itself in fugitive chimeras. Thus my faith in these ideas and my pure love for them, guardian angels of my spirit as they are, increase moment by moment, and will go on increasing to my end, and I hope that I may pass all the more easily from this world into eternity. I pass my silent life in Christian exaltation and humility, and I sometimes have those visions from above through which I have, from my birth, adored heaven upon earth, and which give me power to raise myself to the Lord upon the

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eager wings of my prayers. My illness, though long, painful, and cruel, has always been sufficiently mastered by my will to let me busy myself to some result with history, positive sciences, and the finer parts of religious education, and when my suffering became more violent and for a time interrupted these occupations, I struggled successfully, nevertheless, against *ennui;* for the memories of the past, my resignation to the present, and my faith in the future were rich enough and strong enough in me and round me to prevent my falling from my terrestrial paradise. According to my principles, I would never, in the position in which I am and in which I have placed myself, have been willing to ask anything for my own comfort; but so much kindness and care have been lavished upon me, with so much delicacy and humanity,—which alas! I am unable to return —by every person with whom I have been brought into contact, that wishes which I should not have dared to frame in the most private recesses of my heart have been more than exceeded. I have never been so much overcome by bodily pains that I could not say within myself, while I lifted my thoughts to heaven, 'Come what may of this ray.' And great as these pains have been, I could not dream of comparing them with those sufferings of the soul that we feel so profoundly and poignantly in the recognition of our weaknesses and faults.

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"Moreover, these pains seldom now cause me to lose consciousness; the swelling and inflammation never made great headway, and the fever has always been moderate, though for nearly ten months I have been forced to remain lying on my back, unable to raise myself, and although more than forty pints of matter have come from my chest at the place where the heart is. No, on the contrary, the wound, though still open, is in a good state; and I owe that not only to the excellent nursing around me, but also to the pure blood that I received from you, my mother. Thus I have lacked neither earthly assistance nor heavenly encouragement. Thus, on the anniversary of my birth, I had every reason—oh, not to curse the hour in which I was born, but, on the contrary, after serious contemplation of the world, to thank God and you, my dear parents, for the life that you have given me! I celebrated it, on the 18th of October, by a peaceful and ardent submission to the holy will of God. On Christmas Day I tried to put myself into the temper of children who are devoted to the Lord; and with God's help the new year will pass like its predecessor, in bodily pain, perhaps, but certainly in spiritual joy. And with this wish, the only one that I form, I address myself to you, my dear parents, and to you and yours, my dear brothers and sisters.

"I cannot hope to see a twenty-fifth new year; so

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may the prayer that I have just made be granted! May this picture of my present state afford you some tranquillity, and may this letter that I write to you from the depths of my heart not only prove to you that I am not unworthy of the inexpressible love that you all display, but, on the contrary, ensure this love to me for eternity.

"Within the last few days I have also received your dear letter of the 2nd of December, my kind mother, and the grand-duke's commission has deigned to let me also read my kind brother's letter which accompanied yours. You give me the best of news in regard to the health of all of you, and send me preserved fruits from our dear home. I thank you for them from the bottom of my heart. What causes me most joy in the matter is that you have been solicitously busy about me in summer as in winter, and that you and my dear Julia gathered them and prepared them for me at home, and I abandon my whole soul to that sweet enjoyment.

"I rejoice sincerely at my little cousin's coming into the world; I joyfully congratulate the good parents and the grandparents; I transport myself, for his baptism, into that beloved parish, where I offer him my affection as his Christian brother, and call down on him all the blessings of heaven.

"We shall be obliged, I think, to give up this correspondence, so as not to inconvenience the

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grand-duke's commission. I finish, therefore, by assuring you once more, but for the last time, perhaps, of my profound filial submission and of my fraternal affection.—Your most tenderly attached

"KARL-LUDWIG SAND."

Indeed, from that moment all correspondence between Karl and his family ceased, and he only wrote to them, when he knew his fate, one more letter, which we shall see later on.

We have seen by what attentions Sand was surrounded; their humanity never flagged for an instant. It is the truth, too, that no one saw in him an ordinary murderer, that many pitied him under their breath, and that some excused him aloud. The very commission appointed by the grand-duke prolonged the affair as much as possible; for the severity of Sand's wounds had at first given rise to the belief that there would be no need of calling in the executioner, and the commission was well pleased that God should have undertaken the execution of the judgment. But these expectations were deceived: the skill of the doctor defeated, not indeed the wound, but death. Sand did not recover, but he remained alive; and it began to be evident that it would be needful to kill him.

Indeed, the Emperor Alexander, who had appointed Kotzebue his councillor, and who was under

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no misapprehension as to the cause of the murder, urgently demanded that justice should take its course. The commission of inquiry was therefore obliged to set to work; but as its members were sincerely desirous of having some pretext to delay their proceedings, they ordered that a physician from Heidelberg should visit Sand and make an exact report upon his case; as Sand was kept lying down and as he could not be executed in his bed, they hoped that the physician's report, by declaring it impossible for the prisoner to rise, would come to their assistance and necessitate a further respite.

The chosen doctor came accordingly to Mannheim, and introducing himself to Sand as though attracted by the interest that he inspired, asked him whether he did not feel somewhat better, and whether it would be impossible to rise. Sand looked at him for an instant, and then said, with a smile—

"I understand, sir; they wish to know whether I am strong enough to mount a scaffold: I know nothing about it myself, but we will make the experiment together."

With these words he rose, and accomplishing, with superhuman courage, what he had not attempted for fourteen months, walked twice round the room, came back to his bed, upon which he seated himself, and said—

"You see, sir, I am strong enough; it would there-

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fore be wasting precious time to keep my judges longer about my affair; so let them deliver their judgment, for nothing now prevents its execution."

The doctor made his report; there was no way of retreat; Russia was becoming more and more pressing, and on the 5th of May 1820 the high court of justice delivered the following judgment, which was confirmed on the 12th by His Royal Highness the Grand-Duke of Baden:—

"In the matters under investigation, and after administration of the interrogatory and hearing the defences, and considering the united opinions of the court of justice at Mannheim and the further consultations of the court of justice which declare the accused, Karl Sand of Wonsiedel, guilty of murder, even on his own confession, upon the person of the Russian imperial Councillor of State, Kotzebue; it is ordered accordingly, for his just punishment and for an example that may deter other people, that he is to be put from life to death by the sword.

"All the costs of these investigations, including those occasioned by his public execution, will be defrayed from the funds of the law department, on account of his want of means."

We see that, though it condemned the accused to death, which indeed could hardly be avoided, the

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sentence was both in form and substance as mild as possible, since, though Sand was convicted, his poor family was not reduced by the expenses of a long and costly trial to complete ruin.

Five days were still allowed to elapse, and the verdict was not announced until the 17th. When Sand was informed that two councillors of justice were at the door, he guessed that they were coming to read his sentence to him; he asked a moment to rise, which he had done but once before, in the instance already narrated, during fourteen months. And indeed he was so weak that he could not stand to hear the sentence, and after having greeted the deputation that death sent to him, he asked to sit down, saying that he did so not from cowardice of soul but from weakness of body; then he added, "You are welcome, gentlemen; for I have suffered so much for fourteen months past that you come to me as angels of deliverance."

He heard the sentence quite unaffectedly and with a gentle smile upon his lips; then, when the reading was finished, he said—

"I look for no better fate, gentlemen, and when, more than a year ago, I paused on the little hill that overlooks the town, I saw beforehand the place where my grave would be; and so I ought to thank God and man for having prolonged my existence up to to-day."

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The councillors withdrew; Sand stood up a second time to greet them on their departure, as he had done on their entrance; then he sat down again pensively in his chair, by which Mr. G——, the governor of the prison, was standing. After a moment of silence, a tear appeared at each of the condemned man's eyelids, and ran down his cheeks; then, turning suddenly to Mr. G——, whom he liked very much, he said, "I hope that my parents would rather see me die by this violent death than of some slow and shameful disease. As for me, I am glad that I shall soon hear the hour strike in which my death will satisfy those who hate me, and those whom, according to my principles, I ought to hate."

Then he wrote to his family:—

"MANNHEIM

"*17th of the month of spring, 1820*

"DEAR PARENTS, BROTHERS, AND SISTERS,—You should have received my last letters through the grand-duke's commission; in them I answered yours, and tried to console you for my position by describing the state of my soul as it is, the contempt to which I have attained for everything fragile and earthly, and by which one must necessarily be overcome when such matters are weighed against the fulfilment of an idea, or that intellectual liberty which alone can nourish the soul; in a word, I tried

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to console you by the assurance that the feelings, principles, and convictions of which I formerly spoke are faithfully preserved in me and have remained exactly the same; but I am sure all this was an unnecessary precaution on my part, for there was never a time when you asked anything else of me than *to have God before my eyes and in my heart;* and you have seen how, under your guidance, this precept so passed into my soul that it became my sole object of happiness for this world and the next; no doubt, as He was in and near me, God will be in and near you at the moment when this letter brings you the news of my sentence. I die willingly, and the Lord will give me strength to die as one ought to die.

"I write to you perfectly quiet and calm about all things, and I hope that your lives too will pass calmly and tranquilly until the moment when our souls meet again full of fresh force to love one another and to share eternal happiness together.

"As for me, such as I have lived as long as I have known myself—that is to say, in a serenity full of celestial desires and a courageous and indefatigable love of liberty, such I am about to die.

"May God be with you and with me!—Your son, brother, and friend, KARL-LUDWIG SAND."

From that moment his serenity remained untroubled; during the whole day he talked more gaily

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than usual, slept well, did not awake until half-past seven, said that he felt stronger, and thanked God for visiting him thus.

The nature of the verdict had been known since the day before, and it had been learned that the execution was fixed for the 20th of May—that is to say, three full days after the sentence had been read to the accused.

Henceforward, with Sand's permission, persons who wished to speak to him and whom he was not reluctant to see, were admitted: three among these paid him long and noteworthy visits.

One was Major Holzungen, of the Baden army, who was in command of the patrol that had arrested him, or rather picked him up, dying, and carried him to the hospital. He asked him whether he recognised him, and Sand's head was so clear when he stabbed himself, that although he saw the major only for a moment and had never seen him again since, he remembered the minutest details of the costume which he had been wearing fourteen months previously, and which was the full-dress uniform. When the talk fell upon the death to which Sand was to submit at so early an age, the major pitied him; but Sand answered, with a smile, "There is only one difference between you and me, major; it is that I shall die for my convictions, and you will die for someone else's convictions."

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After the major came a young student from Jena whom Sand had known at the university. He happened to be in the duchy of Baden and wished to visit him. Their recognition was touching, and the student wept much; but Sand consoled him with his usual calmness and serenity.

Then a workman asked to be admitted to see Sand, on the plea that he had been his schoolfellow at Wonsiedel, and although he did not remember his name, he ordered him to be let in: the workman reminded him that he had been one of the little army that Sand had commanded on the day of the assault of St. Catherine's tower. This indication guided Sand, who recognised him perfectly, and then spoke with tender affection of his native place and his dear mountains. He further charged him to greet his family, and to beg his mother, father, brothers, and sisters once more not to be grieved on his account, since the messenger who undertook to deliver his last words could testify in how calm and joyful a temper he was awaiting death.

To this workman succeeded one of the guests whom Sand had met on the staircase directly after Kotzebue's death. He asked him whether he acknowledged his crime and whether he felt any repentance. Sand replied, "I had thought about it during a whole year. I have been thinking of it for fourteen months, and my opinion has never

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varied in any respect: I did what I should have done."

After the departure of this last visitor, Sand sent for Mr. G——, the governor of the prison, and told him that he should like to talk to the executioner before the execution, since he wished to ask for instructions as to how he should hold himself so as to render the operation most certain and easy. Mr. G—— made some objections, but Sand insisted with his usual gentleness, and Mr. G—— at last promised that the man in question should be asked to call at the prison as soon as he arrived from Heidelberg, where he lived.

The rest of the day was spent in seeing more visitors and in philosophical and moral talks, in which Sand developed his social and religious theories with a lucidity of expression and an elevation of thought such as he had, perhaps, never before shown. The governor of the prison from whom I heard these details, told me that he should all his life regret that he did not know shorthand, so that he might have noted all these thoughts, which would have formed a pendant to the Phædo.

Night came. Sand spent part of the evening writing; it is thought that he was composing a poem; but no doubt he burned it, for no trace of it was found. At eleven he went to bed, and slept until six in the morning. Next day he bore the dressing of

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his wound, which was always very painful, with extraordinary courage, without fainting, as he sometimes did, and without suffering a single complaint to escape him: he had spoken the truth; in the presence of death God gave him the grace of allowing his strength to return. The operation was over; Sand was lying down as usual, and Mr. G—— was sitting on the foot of his bed, when the door opened and a man came in and bowed to Sand and to Mr. G——. The governor of the prison immediately stood up, and said to Sand in a voice the emotion of which he could not conceal, "The person who is bowing to you is Mr. Widemann of Heidelberg, to whom you wished to speak."

Then Sand's face was lighted up by a strange joy; he sat up and said, "Sir, you are welcome." Then, making his visitor sit down by his bed, and taking his hand, he began to thank him for being so obliging, and spoke in so intense a tone and so gentle a voice, that Mr. Widemann, deeply moved, could not answer. Sand encouraged him to speak and to give him the details for which he wished, and in order to reassure him, said, "Be firm, sir; for I, on my part, will not fail you: I will not move; and even if you should need two or three strokes to separate my head from my body, as I am told is sometimes the case, do not be troubled on that account."

Then Sand rose, leaning on Mr. G——, to go

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through with the executioner the strange and terrible rehearsal of the drama in which he was to play the leading part on the morrow. Mr. Widemann made him sit in a chair and take the required position, and went into all the details of the execution with him. Then Sand, perfectly instructed, begged him not to hurry and to take his time. Then he thanked him beforehand; "for," added he, "afterwards I shall not be able." Then Sand returned to his bed, leaving the executioner paler and more trembling than himself. All these details have been preserved by Mr. G——; for as to the executioner, his emotion was so great that he could remember nothing.

After Mr. Widemann, three clergymen were introduced, with whom Sand conversed upon religious matters: one of them stayed six hours with him, and on leaving him told him that he was commissioned to obtain from him a promise of not speaking to the people at the place of execution. Sand gave the promise, and added, "Even if I desired to do so, my voice has become so weak that people could not hear it."

Meanwhile the scaffold was being erected in the meadow that extends on the left of the road to Heidelberg. It was a platform five to six feet high and ten feet wide each way. As it was expected that, thanks to the interest inspired by the prisoner and to the nearness to Whitsuntide, the crowd would

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be immense, and as some movement from the universities was apprehended, the prison guards had been trebled, and General Neustein had been ordered to Mannheim from Carlsruhe, with twelve hundred infantry, three hundred and fifty cavalry, and a company of artillery with guns.

On the afternoon of the 19th there arrived, as had been foreseen, so many students, who took up their abode in the neighbouring villages, that it was decided to put forward the hour of the execution, and to let it take place at five in the morning instead of at eleven, as had been arranged. But Sand's consent was necessary for this; for he could not be executed until three full days after the reading of his sentence, and as the sentence had not been read to him till half-past ten Sand had a right to live till eleven o'clock.

Before four in the morning the officials went into the condemned man's room; he was sleeping so soundly that they were obliged to awaken him. He opened his eyes with a smile, as was his custom, and guessing why they came, asked, "Can I have slept so well that it is already eleven in the morning?" They told him that it was not, but that they had come to ask his permission to put forward the time; for, they told him, some collision between the students and the soldiers was feared, and as the military preparations were very thorough, such a

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collision could not be otherwise than fatal to his friends. Sand answered that he was ready that very moment, and only asked time enough to take a bath, as the ancients were accustomed to do before going into battle. But as the verbal authorisation which he had given was not sufficient, a pen and paper were given to Sand, and he wrote, with a steady hand and in his usual writing:—

"I thank the authorities of Mannheim for anticipating my most eager wishes by making my execution six hours earlier.

"Sit nomen Domini benedictum.[1]

"From the prison room, May 20th, day of my deliverance. KARL-LUDWIG SAND."

When Sand had given these two lines to the recorder, the physician came to him to dress his wound, as usual. Sand looked at him with a smile, and then asked, "Is it really worth the trouble?"

"You will be stronger for it," answered the physician.

"Then do it," said Sand.

A bath was brought. Sand lay down in it, and had his long and beautiful hair arranged with the greatest care; then his toilet being completed, he put on a frock-coat of the German shape—that is to say,

[1] "Blessed be the name of the Lord."

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short and with the shirt collar turned back over the shoulders, close white trousers, and high boots. Then Sand seated himself on his bed and prayed some time in a low voice with the clergy; then, when he had finished, he said these two lines of Körner's:—

> "All that is earthly is ended,
> And the life of heaven begins."

He next took leave of the physician and the priests, saying to them, "Do not attribute the emotion of my voice to weakness but to gratitude." Then, upon these gentlemen offering to accompany him to the scaffold, he said, "There is no need; I am perfectly prepared, at peace with God and with my conscience. Besides, am I not almost a Churchman myself?" And when one of them asked whether he was not going out of life in a spirit of hatred, he returned, "Why, good heavens! have I ever felt any?"

An increasing noise was audible from the street, and Sand said again that he was at their disposal and that he was ready. At this moment the executioner came in with his two assistants; he was dressed in a long wadded black coat, beneath which he hid his sword. Sand offered him his hand affectionately; and as Mr. Widemann, embarrassed by the sword which he wished to keep Sand from seeing, did not venture to come forward, Sand said to him, "Come along and show me your sword; I have never seen

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one of the kind, and am curious to know what it is like."

Mr. Widemann, pale and trembling, presented the weapon to him; Sand examined it attentively, and tried the edge with his finger.

"Come," said he, "the blade is good; do not tremble, and all will go well." Then, turning to Mr. G——, who was weeping, he said to him, "You will be good enough, will you not, to do me the service of leading me to the scaffold?"

Mr. G—— made a sign of assent with his head, for he could not answer. Sand took his arm, and spoke for the third time, saying once more, "Well, what are you waiting for, gentlemen? I am ready."

When they reached the courtyard, Sand saw all the prisoners weeping at their windows. Although he had never seen them, they were old friends of his; for every time they passed his door, knowing that the student who had killed Kotzebue lay within, they used to lift their chain, that he might not be disturbed by the noise.

All Mannheim was in the streets that led to the place of execution, and many patrols were passing up and down. On the day when the sentence was announced the whole town had been sought through for a chaise in which to convey Sand to the scaffold, but no one, not even the coachbuilders, would either let one out or sell one; and it had been necessary,

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therefore, to buy one at Heidelberg without saying for what purpose.

Sand found this chaise in the courtyard, and got into it with Mr. G——. Turning to him, he whispered in his ear, "Sir, if you see me turn pale, speak my name to me, my name only, do you hear? That will be enough."

The prison gate was opened, and Sand was seen; then every voice cried with one impulse, "Farewell, Sand, farewell!"

And at the same time flowers, some of which fell into the carriage, were thrown by the crowd that thronged the street, and from the windows. At these friendly cries and at this spectacle, Sand, who until then had shown no moment of weakness, felt tears rising in spite of himself, and while he returned the greetings made to him on all sides, he murmured in a low voice, "O my God, give me courage!"

This first outburst over, the procession set out amid deep silence; only now and again some single voice would call out, "Farewell, Sand!" and a handkerchief waved by some hand that rose out of the crowd would show from what point the last call came. On each side of the chaise walked two of the prison officials, and behind the chaise came a second conveyance with the municipal authorities.

The air was very cold: it had rained all night,

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and the dark and cloudy sky seemed to share in the general sadness. Sand, too weak to remain sitting up, was half lying upon the shoulder of Mr. G——, his companion; his face was gentle, calm and full of pain; his brow free and open, his features, interesting though without regular beauty, seemed to have aged by several years during the fourteen months of suffering that had just elapsed. The chaise at last reached the place of execution, which was surrounded by a battalion of infantry; Sand lowered his eyes from heaven to earth and saw the scaffold. At this sight he smiled gently, and as he left the carriage he said, "Well, God has given me strength so far."

The governor of the prison and the chief officials lifted him that he might go up the steps. During that short ascent pain kept him bowed, but when he had reached the top he stood erect again, saying, "Here then is the place where I am to die!"

Then before he came to the chair on which he was to be seated for the execution, he turned his eyes towards Mannheim, and his gaze travelled over all the throng that surrounded him; at that moment a ray of sunshine broke through the clouds. Sand greeted it with a smile and sat down.

Then, as, according to the orders given, his sentence was to be read to him a second time, he was asked whether he felt strong enough to hear it

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standing. Sand answered that he would try, and that if his physical strength failed him, his moral strength would uphold him. He rose immediately from the fatal chair, begging Mr. G—— to stand near enough to support him if he should chance to stagger. The precaution was unnecessary, Sand did not stagger.

After the judgment had been read, he sat down again and said in a loud voice, "I die trusting in God."

But at these words Mr. G—— interrupted him.

"Sand," said he, "what did you promise?"

"True," he answered; "I had forgotten." He was silent, therefore, to the crowd; but, raising his right hand and extending it solemnly in the air, he said in a low voice, so that he might be heard only by those who were around him, "I take God to witness that I die for the freedom of Germany."

Then, with these words, he did as Conradin did with his glove; he threw his rolled-up handkerchief over the line of soldiers around him, into the midst of the people.

Then the executioner came to cut off his hair; but Sand at first objected.

"It is for your mother," said Mr. Widemann.

"On your honour, sir?" asked Sand.

"On my honour."

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"Then do it," said Sand, offering his hair to the executioner.

Only a few curls were cut off, those only which fell at the back, the others were tied with a ribbon on the top of the head. The executioner then tied his hands on his breast, but as that position was oppressive to him and compelled him on account of his wound to bend his head, his hands were laid flat on his thighs and fixed in that position with ropes. Then, when his eyes were about to be bound, he begged Mr. Widemann to place the bandage in such a manner that he could see the light to his last moment. His wish was fulfilled.

Then a profound and mortal stillness hovered over the whole crowd and surrounded the scaffold. The executioner drew his sword, which flashed like lightning and fell. Instantly a terrible cry rose at once from twenty thousand bosoms; the head had not fallen, and though it had sunk towards the breast still held to the neck. The executioner struck a second time, and struck off at the same blow the head and a part of the hand.

In the same moment, notwithstanding the efforts of the soldiers, their line was broken through; men and women rushed upon the scaffold, the blood was wiped up to the last drop with handkerchiefs; the chair upon which Sand had sat was broken and divided into pieces, and those who could not obtain

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one, cut fragments of bloodstained wood from the scaffold itself.

The head and body were placed in a coffin draped with black, and carried back, with a large military escort, to the prison. At midnight the body was borne silently, without torches or lights, to the Protestant cemetery, in which Kotzebue had been buried fourteen months previously. A grave had been mysteriously dug; the coffin was lowered into it, and those who were present at the burial were sworn upon the New Testament not to reveal the spot where Sand was buried until such time as they were freed from their oath. Then the grave was covered again with the turf, that had been skilfully taken off, and that was relaid on the same spot, so that no new grave could be perceived; then the nocturnal gravediggers departed, leaving guards at the entrance.

There, twenty paces apart, Sand and Kotzebue rest: Kotzebue opposite the gate in the most conspicuous spot of the cemetery, and beneath a tomb upon which is engraved this inscription:—

"The world persecuted him without pity,
Calumny was his sad portion,
He found no happiness save in the arms of his wife,
And no repose save in the bosom of death.
Envy dogged him to cover his path with thorns,
Love bade his roses blossom;
May Heaven pardon him
As he pardons earth!"

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In contrast with this tall and showy monument, standing, as we have said, in the most conspicuous spot of the cemetery, Sand's grave must be looked for in the corner to the extreme left of the entrance gate; and a wild plum tree, some leaves of which every passing traveller carries away, rises alone upon the grave, which is devoid of any inscription.

As for the meadow in which Sand was executed, it is still called by the people "*Sand's Himmelsfahrtsweise,*" which signifies "The manner of Sand's ascension."

Toward the end of September, 1838, we were at Mannheim, where I had stayed three days in order to collect all the details I could find about the life and death of Karl-Ludwig Sand. But at the end of these three days, in spite of my active investigations, these details still remained extremely incomplete, either because I applied in the wrong quarters, or because, being a foreigner, I inspired some distrust in those to whom I applied. I was leaving Mannheim, therefore, somewhat disappointed, and after having visited the little Protestant cemetery where Sand and Kotzebue are buried at twenty paces from each other, I had ordered my driver to take the road to Heidelberg, when, after going a few yards, he, who knew the object of my inquiries, stopped of himself and asked me whether I should

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not like to see the place where Sand was executed. At the same time he pointed to a little mound situated in the middle of a meadow and a few steps from a brook. I assented eagerly, and although the driver remained on the highroad with my travelling companions, I soon recognised the spot indicated, by means of some relics of cypress branches, immortelles, and forget-me-nots scattered upon the earth. It will readily be understood that this sight, instead of diminishing my desire for information, increased it. I was feeling, then, more than ever dissatisfied at going away, knowing so little, when I saw a man of some five-and-forty to fifty years old, who was walking a little distance from the place where I myself was, and who, guessing the cause that drew me thither, was looking at me with curiosity. I determined to make a last effort, and going up to him, I said, "Oh, sir, I am a stranger; I am travelling to collect all the rich and poetic traditions of your Germany. By the way in which you look at me, I guess that you know which of them attracts me to this meadow. Could you give me any information about the life and death of Sand?"

"With what object, sir?" the person to whom I spoke asked me in almost unintelligible French.

"With a very German object, be assured, sir," I replied. "From the little I have learned, Sand seems to me to be one of those ghosts that appear

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only the greater and the more poetic for being wrapped in a shroud stained with blood. But he is not known in France; he might be put on the same level there with a Fieschi or a Meunier, and I wish, to the best of my ability, to enlighten the minds of my countrymen about him."

"It would be a great pleasure to me, sir, to assist in such an undertaking; but you see that I can scarcely speak French; you do not speak German at all; so that we shall find it difficult to understand each other."

"If that is all," I returned, "I have in my carriage yonder an interpreter, or rather an interpretress, with whom you will, I hope, be quite satisfied, who speaks German like Goethe, and to whom, when you have once begun to speak to her, I defy you not to tell everything."

"Let us go, then, sir," answered the pedestrian. "I ask no better than to be agreeable to you."

We walked toward the carriage, which was still waiting on the highroad, and I presented to my travelling companion the new recruit whom I had just gained. The usual greetings were exchanged, and the dialogue began in the purest Saxon. Though I did not understand a word that was said, it was easy for me to see, by the rapidity of the questions and the length of the answers, that the conversation was most interesting. At last, at the

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end of half an hour, growing desirous of knowing to what point they had come, I said, "Well?"

"Well," answered my interpreter, "you are in luck's way, and you could not have asked a better person."

"The gentleman knew Sand, then?"

"The gentleman is the governor of the prison in which Sand was confined."

"Indeed?"

"For nine months—that is to say, from the day he left the hospital—this gentleman saw him every day."

"Excellent!"

"But that is not all: this gentleman was with him in the carriage that took him to execution; this gentleman was with him on the scaffold; there's only one portrait of Sand in all Mannheim, and this gentleman has it."

I was devouring every word; a mental alchemist, I was opening my crucible and finding gold in it.

"Just ask," I resumed eagerly, "whether the gentleman will allow us to take down in writing the particulars that he can give me."

My interpreter put another question, then, turning towards me, said, "Granted."

Mr. G—— got into the carriage with us, and instead of going on to Heidelberg, we returned to Mannheim, and alighted at the prison.

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Mr. G—— did not once depart from the ready kindness that he had shown. In the most obliging manner, patient over the minutest trifles, and remembering most happily, he went over every circumstance, putting himself at my disposal like a professional guide. At last, when every particular about Sand had been sucked dry, I began to ask him about the manner in which executions were performed. "As to that," said he, "I can offer you an introduction to someone at Heidelberg who can give you all the information you can wish for upon the subject."

I accepted gratefully, and as I was taking leave of Mr. G——, after thanking him a thousand times, he handed me the offered letter. It bore this superscription: "To Herr-doctor Widemann, No. 111 High Street, Heidelberg."

I turned to Mr. G—— once more.

"Is he, by chance, a relation of the man who executed Sand?" I asked.

"He is his son, and was standing by when the head fell."

"What is his calling, then?"

"The same as that of his father, whom he succeeded."

"But you call him 'doctor'?"

"Certainly; with us, executioners have that title."

"But, then, doctors of what?"

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"Of surgery."

"Really?" said I. "With us it is just the contrary; surgeons are called executioners."

"You will find him, moreover," added Mr. G——, "a very distinguished young man, who, although he was very young at that time, has retained a vivid recollection of that event. As for his poor father, I think he would as willingly have cut off his own right hand as have executed Sand; but if he had refused, someone else would have been found. So he had to do what he was ordered to do, and he did his best."

I thanked Mr. G——, fully resolving to make use of his letter, and we left for Heidelberg, where we arrived at eleven in the evening.

My first visit next day was to Dr. Widemann. It was not without some emotion, which, moreover, I saw reflected upon the faces of my travelling companions, that I rang at the door of the last judge, as the Germans call him. An old woman opened the door to us, and ushered us into a pretty little study, on the left of a passage and at the foot of a staircase, where we waited while Mr. Widemann finished dressing. This little room was full of curiosities, madrepores, shells, stuffed birds, and dried plants; a double-barrelled gun, a powder-flask, and a game-bag showed that Mr. Widemann was a hunter.

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After a moment we heard his footstep, and the door opened. Mr. Widemann was a very handsome young man, of thirty or thirty-two, with black whiskers entirely surrounding his manly and expressive face; his morning dress showed a certain rural elegance. He seemed at first not only embarrassed but pained by our visit. The aimless curiosity of which he seemed to be the object was indeed odd. I hastened to give him Mr. G——'s letter and to tell him what reason brought me. Then he gradually recovered himself, and at last showed himself no less hospitable and obliging towards us than he to whom we owed the introduction had been, the day before.

Mr. Widemann then gathered together all his remembrances; he, too, had retained a vivid recollection of Sand, and he told us among other things that his father, at the risk of bringing himself into ill odour, had asked leave to have a new scaffold made at his own expense, so that no other criminal might be executed upon the altar of the martyr's death. Permission had been given, and Mr. Widemann had used the wood of the scaffold for the doors and windows of a little country house standing in a vineyard. Then for three or four years this cottage became a shrine for pilgrims; but after a time, little by little, the crowd grew less, and at the present day, when some of those who wiped the blood from the

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scaffold with their handkerchiefs have become public functionaries, receiving salaries from Government, only foreigners ask, now and again, to see these strange relics.

Mr. Widemann gave me a guide; for, after hearing everything, I wanted to see everything. The house stands half a league away from Heidelberg, on the left of the road to Carlsruhe, and half-way up the mountain-side. It is perhaps the only monument of the kind that exists in the world.

Our readers will judge better from this anecdote than from anything more we could say, what sort of man he was who left such a memory in the hearts of his gaoler and his executioner.

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URBAIN GRANDIER

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URBAIN GRANDIER

1634

CHAPTER I

ON Sunday, the 26th of November, 1631, there was great excitement in the little town of Loudun, especially in the narrow streets which led to the church of Saint-Pierre in the market-place, from the gate of which the town was entered by anyone coming from the direction of the abbey of Saint-Jouin-les-Marmes. This excitement was caused by the expected arrival of a personage who had been much in people's mouths latterly in Loudun, and about whom there was such difference of opinion that discussion on the subject between those who were on his side and those who were against him was carried on with true provincial acrimony. It was easy to see, by the varied expressions on the faces of those who turned the doorsteps into improvised debating clubs, how varied were the feelings with which the man would be welcomed who had himself formally announced to

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friends and enemies alike the exact date of his return.

About nine o'clock a kind of sympathetic vibration ran through the crowd, and with the rapidity of a flash of lightning the words, "There he is! there he is!" passed from group to group. At this cry some withdrew into their houses and shut their doors and darkened their windows, as if it were a day of public mourning, while others opened them wide, as if to let joy enter. In a few moments the uproar and confusion evoked by the news was succeeded by the deep silence of breathless curiosity.

Then, through the silence, a figure advanced, carrying a branch of laurel in one hand as a token of triumph. It was that of a young man of from thirty-two to thirty-four years of age, with a graceful and well-knit frame, an aristocratic air and faultlessly beautiful features of a somewhat haughty expression. Although he had walked three leagues to reach the town, the ecclesiastical garb which he wore was not only elegant but of dainty freshness. His eyes turned to heaven, and singing in a sweet voice praise to the Lord, he passed through the streets leading to the church in the market-place with a slow and solemn gait, without vouchsafing a look, a word, or a gesture to anyone. The entire crowd, falling into step, marched behind him as he advanced, singing like him, the singers being the

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prettiest girls in Loudun, for we have forgotten to say that the crowd consisted almost entirely of women.

Meanwhile the object of all this commotion arrived at length at the porch of the church of Saint-Pierre. Ascending the steps, he knelt at the top and prayed in a low voice, then rising he touched the church doors with his laurel branch, and they opened wide as if by magic, revealing the choir decorated and illuminated as if for one of the four great feasts of the year, and with all its scholars, choir boys, singers, beadles, and vergers in their places. Glancing around, he for whom they were waiting came up the nave, passed through the choir, knelt for a second time at the foot of the altar, upon which he laid the branch of laurel, then putting on a robe as white as snow and passing the stole around his neck, he began the celebration of the mass before a congregation composed of all those who had followed him. At the end of the mass a *Te Deum* was sung.

He who had just rendered thanks to God for his own victory with all the solemn ceremonial usually reserved for the triumphs of kings was the priest Urbain Grandier. Two days before, he had been acquitted, in virtue of a decision pronounced by M. d'Escoubleau de Sourdis, Archbishop of Bordeaux, of an accusation brought against him of which he

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had been declared guilty by a magistrate, and in punishment of which he had been condemned to fast on bread and water every Friday for three months, and forbidden to exercise his priestly functions in the diocese of Poitiers for five years and in the town of Loudun for ever.

These are the circumstances under which the sentence had been passed and the judgment reversed.

Urbain Grandier was born at Rovère, a village near Sablé, a little town of Bas-Maine. Having studied the sciences with his father Pierre and his uncle Claude Grandier, who were learned astrologers and alchemists, he entered, at the age of twelve, the Jesuit college at Bordeaux, having already received the ordinary education of a young man. The professors soon found that besides his considerable attainments he had great natural gifts for languages and oratory; they therefore made of him a thorough classical scholar, and in order to develop his oratorical talent encouraged him to practise preaching. They soon grew very fond of a pupil who was likely to bring them so much credit, and as soon as he was old enough to take holy orders they gave him the cure of souls in the parish of Saint-Pierre in Loudun, which was in the gift of the college. When he had been some months installed there as a priest-in-charge, he received a

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prebendal stall, thanks to the same patrons, in the collegiate church of Sainte-Croix.

It is easy to understand that the bestowal of these two positions on so young a man, who did not even belong to the province, made him seem in some sort a usurper of rights and privileges belonging to the people of the country, and drew upon him the envy of his brother-ecclesiastics. There were, in fact, many other reasons why Urbain should be an object of jealousy to these: first, as we have already said, he was very handsome, then the instruction which he had received from his father had opened the world of science to him and given him the key to a thousand things which were mysteries to the ignorant, but which he fathomed with the greatest ease. Furthermore, the comprehensive course of study which he had followed at the Jesuit college had raised him above a crowd of prejudices, which are sacred to the vulgar, but for which he made no secret of his contempt; and lastly, the eloquence of his sermons had drawn to his church the greater part of the regular congregations of the other religious communities, especially of the mendicant orders, who had till then, in what concerned preaching, borne away the palm at Loudun. As we have said, all this was more than enough to excite, first jealousy, and then hatred. And both were excited in no ordinary degree.

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We all know how easily the ill-natured gossip of a small town can rouse the angry contempt of the masses for everything which is beyond or above them. In a wider sphere Urbain would have shone by his many gifts, but, cooped up as he was within the walls of a little town and deprived of air and space, all that might have conduced to his success in Paris led to his destruction at Loudun.

It was also unfortunate for Urbain that his character, far from winning pardon for his genius, augmented the hatred which the latter inspired. Urbain, who in his intercourse with his friends was cordial and agreeable, was sarcastic, cold, and haughty to his enemies. When he had once resolved on a course, he pursued it unflinchingly; he jealously exacted all the honour due to the rank at which he had arrived, defending it as though it were a conquest; he also insisted on enforcing all his legal rights, and he resented the opposition and angry words of casual opponents with a harshness which made them his lifelong enemies.

The first example which Urbain gave of this inflexibility was in 1620, when he gained a lawsuit against a priest named Meunier. He caused the sentence to be carried out with such rigour that he awoke an inextinguishable hatred in Meunier's mind, which ever after burst forth on the slightest provocation.

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A second lawsuit, which he likewise gained, was one which he undertook against the chapter of Sainte-Croix with regard to a house, his claim to which the chapter disputed. Here again he displayed the same determination to exact his strict legal rights to the last iota, and unfortunately Mignon, the attorney of the unsuccessful chapter, was a revengeful, vindictive, and ambitious man; too commonplace ever to arrive at a high position, and yet too much above his surroundings to be content with the secondary position which he occupied. This man, who was a canon of the collegiate church of Sainte-Croix and director of the Ursuline convent, will have an important part to play in the following narrative. Being as hypocritical as Urbain was straightforward, his ambition was to gain wherever his name was known a reputation for exalted piety; he therefore affected in his life the asceticism of an anchorite and the self-denial of a saint. As he had much experience in ecclesiastical lawsuits, he looked on the chapter's loss of this one, of which he had in some sort guaranteed the success, as a personal humiliation, so that when Urbain gave himself airs of triumph and exacted the last letter of his bond, as in the case of Meunier, he turned Mignon into an enemy who was not only more relentless but more dangerous than the former.

In the meantime, and in consequence of this law-

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suit, a certain Barot, an uncle of Mignon and his partner as well, got up a dispute with Urbain, but as he was a man below mediocrity, Urbain required in order to crush him only to let fall from the height of his superiority a few of those disdainful words which brand as deeply as a red-hot iron. This man, though totally wanting in parts, was very rich, and having no children was always surrounded by a horde of relatives, every one of whom was absorbed in the attempt to make himself so agreeable that his name would appear in Barot's will. This being so, the mocking words which were rained down on Barot spattered not only himself but also all those who had sided with him in the quarrel, and thus added considerably to the tale of Urbain's enemies.

About this epoch a still graver event took place. Amongst the most assiduous frequenters of the confessional in his church was a young and pretty girl, Julie by name, the daughter of the king's attorney, Trinquant—Trinquant being, as well as Barot, an uncle of Mignon. Now it happened that this young girl fell into such a state of debility that she was obliged to keep her room. One of her friends, named Marthe Pelletier, giving up society, of which she was very fond, undertook to nurse the patient, and carried her devotion so far as to shut herself up in the same room with her. When Julie Trin-

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quant had recovered and was able again to take her place in the world, it came out that Marthe Pelletier, during her weeks of retirement, had given birth to a child, which had been baptized and then put out to nurse. Now, by one of those odd whims which so often take possession of the public mind, everyone in Loudun persisted in asserting that the real mother of the infant was not she who had acknowledged herself as such—that, in short, Marthe Pelletier had sold her good name to her friend Julie for a sum of money; and of course it followed as a matter about which there could be no possible doubt, that Urbain was the father.

Trinquant hearing of the reports about his daughter, took upon himself as king's attorney to have Marthe Pelletier arrested and imprisoned. Being questioned about the child, she insisted that she was its mother, and would take its maintenance upon herself. To have brought a child into the world under such circumstances was a sin, but not a crime; Trinquant was therefore obliged to set Marthe at liberty, and the abuse of justice of which he was guilty served only to spread the scandal farther and to strengthen the public in the belief it had taken up.

Hitherto, whether through the intervention of the heavenly powers, or by means of his own cleverness, Urbain Grandier had come out victor in every

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struggle in which he had engaged, but each victory had added to the number of his enemies, and these were now so numerous that any other than he would have been alarmed, and have tried either to conciliate them or to take precautions against their malice; but Urbain, wrapped in his pride, and perhaps conscious of his innocence, paid no attention to the counsels of his most faithful followers, but went on his way unheeding.

All the opponents whom till now Urbain had encountered had been entirely unconnected with each other, and had each struggled for his own individual ends. Urbain's enemies, believing that the cause of his success was to be found in the want of co-operation among themselves, now determined to unite in order to crush him. In consequence, a conference was held at Barot's, at which, besides Barot himself, Meunier, Trinquant, and Mignon took part, and the latter had also brought with him one Menuau, a king's counsel and his own most intimate friend, who was, however, influenced by other motives than friendship in joining the conspiracy. The fact was, that Menuau was in love with a woman who had steadfastly refused to show him any favour, and he had got firmly fixed in his head that the reason for her else inexplicable indifference and disdain was that Urbain had been beforehand with him in finding an entrance to her heart. The object of the

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meeting was to agree as to the best means of driving the common enemy out of Loudun and its neighbourhood.

Urbain's life was so well ordered that it presented little which his enemies could use as a handle for their purpose. His only foible seemed to be a predilection for female society; while in return all the wives and daughters of the place, with the unerring instinct of their sex, seeing that the new priest was young, handsome, and eloquent, chose him, whenever it was possible, as their spiritual director. As this preference had already offended many husbands and fathers, the decision the conspirators arrived at was that on this side alone was Grandier vulnerable, and that their only chance of success was to attack him where he was weakest. Almost at once, therefore, the vague reports which had been floating about began to attain a certain definiteness: there were allusions made, though no name was mentioned, to a young girl in Loudun, who in spite of Grandier's frequent unfaithfulness yet remained his mistress-in-chief; then it began to be whispered that the young girl, having had conscientious scruples about her love for Urbain, he had allayed them by an act of sacrilege—that is to say, he had, as priest, in the middle of the night, performed the service of marriage between himself and his mistress. The more absurd the reports, the

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more credence did they gain, and it was not long till everyone in Loudun believed them true, although no one was able to name the mysterious heroine of the tale who had had the courage to contract a marriage with a priest; and considering how small Loudun was, this was most extraordinary.

Resolute and full of courage as was Grandier, at length he could not conceal from himself that his path lay over quicksands: he felt that slander was secretly closing him round, and that as soon as he was well entangled in her shiny folds, she would reveal herself by raising her abhorred head, and that then a mortal combat between them would begin. But it was one of his convictions that to draw back was to acknowledge one's guilt; besides, as far as he was concerned, it was probably too late for him to retrace his steps. He therefore went on his way, as unyielding, as scornful, and as haughty as ever.

Among those who were supposed to be most active in spreading the slanders relative to Urbain was a man called Duthibaut, a person of importance in the province, who was supposed by the townspeople to hold very advanced views, and who was a "Sir Oracle" to whom the commonplace and vulgar turned for enlightenment. Some of this man's strictures on Grandier were reported to the latter, especially some calumnies to which Duthibaut had

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given vent at the Marquis de Bellay's; and one day, as Grandier, arrayed in priestly garments, was about to enter the church of Sainte-Croix to assist in the service, he encountered Duthibaut at the entrance, and with his usual haughty disdain accused him of slander. Duthibaut, who had got into the habit of saying and doing whatever came into his head without fear of being called to account, partly because of his wealth and partly because of the influence he had gained over the narrow-minded, who are so numerous in a small provincial town, and who regarded him as being much above them, was so furious at this public reprimand, that he raised his cane and struck Urbain.

The opportunity which this affront afforded Grandier of being revenged on all his enemies was too precious to be neglected, but, convinced, with too much reason, that he would never obtain justice from the local authorities, although the respect due to the Church had been infringed, in his person he decided to appeal to King Louis XIII, who deigned to receive him, and deciding that the insult offered to a priest robed in the sacred vestments should be expiated, sent the cause to the high court of Parliament, with instructions that the case against Duthibaut should be tried and decided there.

Hereupon Urbain's enemies saw they had no time to lose, and took advantage of his absence to make

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counter accusations against him. Two worthless beings, named Cherbonneau and Bugrau, agreed to become informers, and were brought before the ecclesiastical magistrate at Poitiers. They accused Grandier of having corrupted women and girls, of indulging in blasphemy and profanity, of neglecting to read his breviary daily, and of turning God's sanctuary into a place of debauchery and prostitution.

The information was taken down, and Louis Chauvet, the civil lieutenant, and the archpriest of Saint-Marcel and the Loudenois, were appointed to investigate the matter, so that, while Urbain was instituting proceedings against Duthibaut in Paris, information was laid against himself in Loudun. This matter thus set going was pushed forward with all the acrimony so common in religious prosecutions; Trinquant appeared as a witness, and drew many others after him, and whatever omissions were found in the depositions were interpolated according to the needs of the prosecution. The result was that the case when fully got up appeared to be so serious that it was sent to the Bishop of Poitiers for trial. Now the bishop was not only surrounded by the friends of those who were bringing the accusations against Grandier, but had himself a grudge against him. It had happened some time before that Urbain, the case being urgent, had dispensed with the usual notice of a marriage, and

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the bishop, knowing this, found in the papers laid before him, superficial as they were, sufficient evidence against Urbain to justify him in issuing a warrant for his apprehension, which was drawn up in the following words:—

"Henri-Louis, Chataignier de la Rochepezai, by divine mercy Bishop of Poitiers, in view of the charges and informations conveyed to us by the archpriest of Loudun against Urbain Grandier, priest-in-charge of the Church of Saint-Pierre in the Market-Place at Loudun, in virtue of a commission appointed by us directed to the said archpriest, or in his absence to the Prior of Chassaignes, in view also of the opinion given by our attorney upon the said charges, have ordered and do hereby order that Urbain Grandier, the accused, be quietly taken to the prison in our palace in Poitiers, if it so be that he be taken and apprehended, and if not, that he be summoned to appear at his domicile within three days, by the first apparitor-priest, or tonsured clerk, and also by the first royal sergeant, upon this warrant, and we request the aid of the secular authorities, and to them, or to any one of them, we hereby give power and authority to carry out this decree notwithstanding any opposition or appeal, and the said Grandier having been heard, such a decision will be given by our attorney as the facts may seem to warrant.

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"Given at Dissay the 22nd day of October 1629, and signed in the original as follows:—

"HENRI-LOUIS, Bishop of Poitiers."

Grandier was, as we have said, at Paris when these proceedings were taken against him, conducting before the Parliament his case against Duthibaut. The latter received a copy of the decision arrived at by the bishop, before Grandier knew of the charges that had been formulated against him, and having in the course of his defence drawn a terrible picture of the immorality of Grandier's life, he produced as a proof of the truth of his assertions the damning document which had been put into his hands. The court, not knowing what to think of the turn affairs had taken, decided that before considering the accusations brought by Grandier, he must appear before his bishop to clear himself of the charges brought against himself. Consequently he left Paris at once, and arrived at Loudun, where he only stayed long enough to learn what had happened in his absence, and then went on to Poitiers in order to draw up his defence. He had, however, no sooner set foot in the place than he was arrested by a sheriff's officer named Chatry, and confined in the prison of the episcopal palace.

It was the middle of November, and the prison was at all times cold and damp, yet no attention was paid to Grandier's request that he should be

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transferred to some other place of confinement. Convinced by this that his enemies had more influence than he had supposed, he resolved to possess his soul in patience, and remained a prisoner for two months, during which even his warmest friends believed him lost, while Duthibaut openly laughed at the proceedings instituted against himself, which he now believed would never go any farther, and Barot had already selected one of his heirs, a certain Ismaël Boulieau, as successor to Urbain as priest and prebendary.

It was arranged that the costs of the lawsuit should be defrayed out of a fund raised by the prosecutors, the rich paying for the poor; for as all the witnesses lived at Loudun and the trial was to take place at Poitiers, considerable expense would be incurred by the necessity of bringing so many people such a distance; but the lust of vengeance proved stronger than the lust of gold; the subscription expected from each being estimated according to his fortune, each paid without a murmur, and at the end of two months the case was concluded.

In spite of the evident pains taken by the prosecution to strain the evidence against the defendant, the principal charge could not be sustained, which was that he had led astray many wives and daughters in Loudun. No one woman came forward to complain of her ruin by Grandier; the name of no

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single victim of his alleged immorality was given. The conduct of the case was the most extraordinary ever seen; it was evident that the accusations were founded on hearsay and not on fact, and yet a decision and sentence against Grandier were pronounced on January 3rd, 1630. The sentence was as follows: For three months to fast each Friday on bread and water by way of penance; to be inhibited from the performance of clerical functions in the diocese of Poitiers for five years, and in the town of Loudun for ever.

Both parties appealed from this decision: Grandier to the Archbishop of Bordeaux, and his adversaries, on the advice of the attorney to the diocese, pleading a miscarriage of justice, to the Parliament of Paris; this last appeal being made in order to overwhelm Grandier and break his spirit. But Grandier's resolution enabled him to face this attack boldly: he engaged counsel to defend his case before the Parliament, while he himself conducted his appeal to the Archbishop of Bordeaux. But as there were many necessary witnesses, and it was almost impossible to bring them all such a great distance, the archiepiscopal court sent the appeal to the presidial court of Poitiers. The public prosecutor of Poitiers began a fresh investigation, which being conducted with impartiality was not encouraging to Grandier's accusers. There had been many conflicting state-

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ments made by the witnesses, and these were now repeated: other witnesses had declared quite openly that they had been bribed; others again stated that their depositions had been tampered with; and amongst these latter was a certain priest named Méchin, and also that Ishmaël Boulieau whom Barot had been in such a hurry to select as candidate for the reversion of Grandier's preferments. Boulieau's deposition has been lost, but we can lay Méchin's before the reader, for the original has been preserved, just as it issued from his pen:—

"I, Gervais Méchin, curate-in-charge of the Church of Saint-Pierre in the Market Place at Loudun, certify by these presents, signed by my hand, to relieve my conscience as to a certain report which is being spread abroad, that I had said in support of an accusation brought by Gilles Robert, archpriest, against Urbain Grandier, priest-in-charge of Saint-Pierre, that I had found the said Grandier lying with women and girls in the church of Saint Pierre, the doors being closed.

"*Item*, that on several different occasions, at unsuitable hours both day and night, I had seen women and girls disturb the said Grandier by going into his bedroom, and that some of the said women remained with him from one o'clock in the afternoon till three o'clock the next morning, their

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maids bringing them their suppers and going away again at once.

"*Item,* that I had seen the said Grandier in the church, the doors being open, but that as soon as some women entered he closed them. As I earnestly desire that such reports should cease, I declare by these presents that I have never seen the said Grandier with women or girls in the church, the doors being closed; that I have never found him there alone with women or girls; that when he spoke to either someone else was always present, and the doors were open; and as to their posture, I think I made it sufficiently clear when in the witnessbox that Grandier was seated and the women scattered over the church; furthermore, I have never seen either women or girls enter Grandier's bedroom either by day or night, although it is true that I have heard people in the corridor coming and going late in the evening, who they were I cannot say, but a brother of the said Grandier sleeps close by; neither have I any knowledge that either women or girls had their suppers brought to the said room. I have also never said that he neglected the reading of his breviary, because that would be contrary to the truth, seeing that on several occasions he borrowed mine and read his hours in it. I also declare that I have never seen him close the doors of the church, and that whenever I have seen him speaking to

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women I have never noticed any impropriety; I have not ever seen him touch them in any way, they have only spoken together; and if anything is found in my deposition contrary to the above, it is without my knowledge, and was never read to me, for I would not have signed it, and I say and affirm all this in homage to the truth.

"Done the last day of October 1630,

"(*Signed*) G. MÉCHIN."

In the face of such proofs of innocence none of the accusations could be considered as established and so, according to the decision of the presidial court of Poitiers, dated the 25th of May 1634, the decision of the bishop's court was reversed, and Grandier was acquitted of the charges brought against him. However, he had still to appear before the Archbishop of Bordeaux, that his acquittal might be ratified. Grandier took advantage of a visit which the archbishop paid to his abbey at Saint-Jouin-les-Marmes, which was only three leagues from Loudun, to make this appearance; his adversaries, who were discouraged by the result of the proceedings at Poitiers, scarcely made any defence, and the archbishop, after an examination which brought clearly to light the innocence of the accused, acquitted and absolved him.

The rehabilitation of Grandier before his bishop had two important results: the first was that it clear-

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ly established his innocence, and the second that it brought into prominence his high attainments and eminent qualities. The archbishop seeing the persecutions to which he was subjected, felt a kindly interest in him, and advised him to exchange into some other diocese, leaving a town the principal inhabitants of which appeared to have vowed him a relentless hate. But such an abandonment of his rights was foreign to the character of Urbain, and he declared to his superior that, strong in His Grace's approbation and the testimony of his own conscience, he would remain in the place to which God had called him. Monseigneur de Sourdis did not feel it his duty to urge Urbain any further, but he had enough insight into his character to perceive that if Urbain should one day fall, it would be, like Satan, through pride; for he added another sentence to his decision, recommending him to fulfil the duties of his office with discretion and modesty, *according to the decrees of the Fathers and the canonical constitutions.* The triumphal entry of Urbain into Loudun with which we began our narrative shows the spirit in which he took his recommendation.

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CHAPTER II

URBAIN GRANDIER was not satisfied with the arrogant demonstration by which he signalised his return, which even his friends had felt to be ill advised; instead of allowing the hate he had aroused to die away or at least to fall asleep by letting the past be past, he continued with more zeal than ever his proceedings against Duthibaut, and succeeded in obtaining a decree from the Parliament of La Tournelle, by which Duthibaut was summoned before it, and obliged to listen bareheaded to a reprimand, to offer apologies, and to pay damages and costs.

Having thus got the better of one enemy, Urbain turned on the others, and showed himself more indefatigable in the pursuit of justice than they had been in the pursuit of vengeance. The decision of the archbishop had given him a right to a sum of money for compensation, and interest thereon, as well as to the restitution of the revenues of his livings, and there being some demur made, he announced publicly that he intended to exact this reparation to the uttermost farthing, and set about

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collecting all the evidence which was necessary for the success of a new lawsuit for libel and forgery which he intended to begin. It was in vain that his friends assured him that the vindication of his innocence had been complete and brilliant, it was in vain that they tried to convince him of the danger of driving the vanquished to despair, Urbain replied that he was ready to endure all the persecutions which his enemies might succeed in inflicting on him, but as long as he felt that he had right upon his side he was incapable of drawing back.

Grandier's adversaries soon became conscious of the storm which was gathering above their heads, and feeling that the struggle between themselves and this man would be one of life or death, Mignon, Barot, Meunier, Duthibaut, and Menuau met Trinquant at the village of Pindadane, in a house belonging to the latter, in order to consult about the dangers which threatened them. Mignon had, however, already begun to weave the threads of a new intrigue, which he explained in full to the others; they lent a favourable ear, and his plan was adopted. We shall see it unfold itself by degrees, for it is the basis of our narrative.

We have already said that Mignon was the director of the convent of Ursulines at Loudun. Now the Ursuline order was quite modern, for the historic controversies to which the slightest men-

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tion of the martyrdom of St. Ursula and her eleven thousand virgins gave rise, had long hindered the foundation of an order in the saint's honour. However, in 1560 Madame Angèle de Bresse established such an order in Italy, with the same rules as the Augustinian order. This gained the approbation of Pope Gregory XIII in 1572. In 1614, Madeleine Lhuillier, with the approval of Pope Paul V, introduced this order into France, by founding a convent at Paris, whence it rapidly spread over the whole kingdom, so that in 1626, only six years before the time when the events just related took place, a sisterhood was founded in the little town of Loudun.

Although this community at first consisted entirely of ladies of good family, daughters of nobles, officers, judges, and the better class of citizens, and numbered amongst its founders Jeanne de Belfield, daughter of the late Marquis of Cose, and relative of M. de Laubardemont, Mademoiselle de Fazili, cousin of the cardinal-duke, two ladies of the house of Barbenis de Nogaret, Madame de Lamothe, daughter of the Marquis Lamothe-Baracé of Anjou, and Madame d'Escoubleau de Sourdis, of the same family as the Archbishop of Bordeaux, yet as these nuns had almost all entered the convent because of their want of fortune, the community found itself at the time of its esablishment richer in blood than in money, and was obliged instead of building to

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purchase a private house. The owner of this house was a certain Moussaut du Frêne, whose brother was a priest. This brother, therefore, naturally became the first director of these godly women. Less than a year after his appointment he died, and the directorship became vacant.

The Ursulines had bought the house in which they lived much below its normal value, for it was regarded as a haunted house by all the town. The landlord had rightly thought that there was no better way of getting rid of the ghosts than to confront them with a religious sisterhood, the members of which, passing their days in fasting and prayer, would be hardly likely to have their nights disturbed by bad spirits; and in truth, during the year which they had already passed in the house, no ghost had ever put in an appearance—a fact which had greatly increased the reputation of the nuns for sanctity.

When their director died, it so happened that the boarders took advantage of the occasion to indulge in some diversion at the expense of the older nuns, who were held in general detestation by the youth of the establishment on account of the rigour with which they enforced the rules of the order. Their plan was to raise once more those spirits which had been, as everyone supposed, permanently relegated to outer darkness. So noises began to be heard on the roof of the house, which resolved themselves

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into cries and groans; then growing bolder, the spirits entered the attics and garrets, announcing their presence by clanking of chains; at last they became so familiar that they invaded the dormitories, where they dragged the sheets off the sisters and abstracted their clothes.

Great was the terror in the convent, and great the talk in the town, so that the mother superior called her wisest nuns around her and asked them what, in their opinion, would be the best course to take in the delicate circumstances in which they found themselves. Without a dissentient voice, the conclusion arrived at was, that the late director should be immediately replaced by a man still holier than he, if such a man could be found, and whether because he possessed a reputation for sanctity, or for some other reason, their choice fell on Urbain Grandier. When the offer of the post was brought to him, he answered that he was already responsible for two important charges, and that he therefore had not enough time to watch over the snow-white flock which they wished to entrust to him, as a good shepherd should, and he recommended the lady superior to seek out another more worthy and less occupied than himself.

This answer, as may be supposed, wounded the self-esteem of the sisters: they next turned their eyes towards Mignon, priest and canon of the col-

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legiate church of Sainte-Croix, and he, although he felt deeply hurt that they had not thought first of him, accepted the position eagerly; but the recollection that Grandier had been preferred before himself kept awake in him one of those bitter hatreds which time, instead of soothing, intensifies. From the foregoing narrative the reader can see to what this hate led.

As soon as the new director was appointed, the mother superior confided to him the kind of foes which he would be expected to vanquish. Instead of comforting her by the assurance that no ghosts existing, it could not be ghosts who ran riot in the house, Mignon saw that by pretending to lay these phantoms he could acquire the reputation for holiness he so much desired. So he answered that the Holy Scriptures recognised the existence of ghosts by relating how the witch of Endor had made the shade of Samuel appear to Saul. He went on to say that the ritual of the Church possessed means of driving away all evil spirits, no matter how persistent they were, provided that he who undertook the task were pure in thought and deed, and that he hoped soon, by the help of God, to rid the convent of its nocturnal visitants, whereupon as a preparation for their expulsion he ordered a three days' fast, to be followed by a general confession.

It does not require any great cleverness to under-

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stand how easily Mignon arrived at the truth by questioning the young penitents as they came before him. The boarders who had played at being ghosts confessed their folly, saying that they had been helped by a young novice of sixteen years of age, named Marie Aubin. She acknowledged that this was true; it was she who used to get up in the middle of the night and open the dormitory door, which her more timid room-mates locked most carefully from within every night, before going to bed—a fact which greatly increased their terror when, despite their precautions, the ghosts still got in. Under pretext of not exposing them to the anger of the superior, whose suspicions would be sure to be awakened if the apparitions were to disappear immediately after the general confession, Mignon directed them to renew their nightly frolics from time to time, but at longer and longer intervals. He then sought an interview with the superior, and assured her that he had found the minds of all those under her charge so chaste and pure that he felt sure through his earnest prayers he would soon clear the convent of the spirits which now pervaded it.

Everything happened as the director had foretold, and the reputation for sanctity of the holy man, who by watching and praying had delivered the worthy Ursulines from their ghostly assailants, increased enormously in the town of Loudun.

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CHAPTER III

HARDLY had tranquillity been restored when Mignon, Duthibaut, Menuau, Meunier, and Barot, having lost their cause before the Archbishop of Bordeaux, and finding themselves threatened by Grandier with a prosecution for libel and forgery, met together to consult as to the best means of defending themselves before the unbending severity of this man, who would, they felt, destroy them if they did not destroy him.

The result of this consultation was that very shortly afterwards queer reports began to fly about; it was whispered that the ghosts whom the pious director had expelled had again invaded the convent, under an invisible and impalpable form, and that several of the nuns had given, by their words and acts, incontrovertible proofs of being possessed.

When these reports were mentioned to Mignon, he, instead of denying their truth, cast up his eyes to heaven and said that God was certainly a great and merciful God, but it was also certain that Satan was very clever, especially when he was backed by that false human science called magic. However,

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as to the reports, though they were not entirely without foundation, he would not go so far as to say that any of the sisters were really possessed by devils, that being a question which time alone could decide.

The effect of such an answer on minds already prepared to listen to the most impossible things, may easily be guessed. Mignon let the gossip go its rounds for several months without giving it any fresh food, but at length, when the time was ripe, he called on the priest of Saint-Jacques at Chinon, and told him that matters had now come to such a pass in the Ursuline convent that he felt it impossible to bear up alone under the responsibility of caring for the salvation of the afflicted nuns, and he begged him to accompany him to the convent. This priest, whose name was Pierre Barré, was exactly the man whom Mignon needed in such a crisis. He was of melancholy temperament, and dreamed dreams and saw visions; his one ambition was to gain a reputation for asceticism and holiness. Desiring to surround his visit with the solemnity befitting such an important event, he set out for Loudun at the head of all his parishioners, the whole procession going on foot, in order to arouse interest and curiosity; but this measure was quite needless it took less than that to set the town agog.

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While the faithful filled the churches offering up prayers for the success of the exorcisms, Mignon and Barré entered upon their task at the convent, where they remained shut up with the nuns for six hours. At the end of this time Barré appeared and announced to his parishioners that they might go back to Chinon without him, for he had made up his mind to remain for the present at Loudun, in order to aid the venerable director of the Ursuline convent in the holy work he had undertaken; he enjoined on them to pray morning and evening, with all possible fervour, that, in spite of the serious dangers by which it was surrounded, the good cause might finally triumph. This advice, unaccompanied as it was by any explanation, redoubled the curiosity of the people, and the belief gained ground that it was not merely one or two nuns who were possessed of devils, but the whole sisterhood. It was not very long before the name of the magician who had worked this wonder began to be mentioned quite openly: Satan, it was said, had drawn Urbain Grandier into his power, through his pride. Urbain had entered into a pact with the Evil Spirit by which he had sold him his soul in return for being made the most learned man on earth. Now, as Urbain's knowledge was much greater than that of the inhabitants of Loudun, this story gained general credence in the town, although here and there was

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to be found a man sufficiently enlightened to shrug his shoulders at these absurdities, and to laugh at the mummeries, of which as yet he saw only the ridiculous side.

For the next ten or twelve days Mignon and Barré spent the greater part of their time at the convent; sometimes remaining there for six hours at a stretch, sometimes the entire day. At length, on Monday, the 11th of October, 1632, they wrote to the priest of Venier, to Messire Guillaume Cerisay de la Guerinière, bailiff of the Loudenois, and to Messire Louis Chauvet, civil lieutenant, begging them to visit the Ursuline convent, in order to examine two nuns who were possessed by evil spirits, and to verify the strange and almost incredible manifestations of this possession. Being thus formally appealed to, the two magistrates could not avoid compliance with the request. It must be confessed that they were not free from curiosity, and felt far from sorry at being able to get to the bottom of the mystery of which for some time the whole town was talking. They repaired, therefore, to the convent, intending to make a thorough investigation as to the reality of the possession and as to the efficacy of the exorcisms employed. Should they judge that the nuns were really possessed, and that those who tried to deliver them were in earnest, they would authorise the continu-

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ation of the efforts at exorcism; but if they were not satisfied on these two points, they would soon put an end to the whole thing as a comedy. When they reached the door, Mignon, wearing alb and stole, came to meet them. He told them that the feelings of the nuns had for more than two weeks been harrowed by the apparition of spectres and other blood-curdling visions, that the mother superior and two nuns had evidently been possessed by evil spirits for over a week; that owing to the efforts of Barré and some Carmelite friars who were good enough to assist him against their common enemies, the devils had been temporarily driven out, but on the previous Sunday night, the 10th of October, the mother superior, Jeanne de Belfield, whose conventual name was Jeanne des Anges, and a lay sister called Jeanne Dumagnoux, had again been entered into by the same spirits. It had, however, been discovered by means of exorcisms that a new compact, of which the symbol and token was a bunch of roses, had been concluded, the symbol and token of the first having been three black thorns. He added that during the time of the first possession the demons had refused to give their names, but by the power of his exorcisms this reluctance had been overcome, the spirit which had resumed possession of the mother superior having at length revealed that its name was Ashtaroth, one of the greatest

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enemies of God, while the devil which had entered into the lay sister was of a lower order, and was called Sabulon. Unfortunately, continued Mignon, just now the two afflicted nuns were resting, and he requested the bailiff and the civil lieutenant to put off their inspection till a little later. The two magistrates were just about to go away, when a nun appeared, saying that the devils were again doing their worst with the two into whom they had entered. Consequently, they accompanied Mignon and the priest from Venier to an upper room, in which were seven narrow beds, of which two only were occupied, one by the mother superior and the other by the lay sister. The superior, who was the more thoroughly possessed of the two, was surrounded by the Carmelite monks, the sisters belonging to the convent, Mathurin Rousseau, priest and canon of Sainte-Croix, and Mannouri, a surgeon from the town.

No sooner did the two magistrates join the others than the superior was seized with violent convulsions, writhing and uttering squeals in exact imitation of a sucking pig. The two magistrates looked on in profound astonishment, which was greatly increased when they saw the patient now bury herself in her bed, now spring right out of it, the whole performance being accompanied by such diabolical gestures and grimaces that, if they were not quite

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convinced that the possession was genuine, they were at least filled with admiration of the manner in which it was simulated. Mignon next informed the bailiff and the civil lieutenant, that although the superior had never learned Latin she would reply in that language to all the questions addressed to her, if such were their desire. The magistrates answered that as they were there in order to examine thoroughly into the facts of the case, they begged the exorcists to give them every possible proof that the possession was real. Upon this, Mignon approached the mother superior, and, having ordered everyone to be silent, placed two of his fingers in her mouth, and, having gone through the form of exorcism prescribed by the ritual, he asked the following questions word for word as they are given:—

D. Propter quam causam ingressus es in corpus hujus virginis?	Why have you entered into the body of this young girl?
R. Causa animositatis.	Out of enmity.
D. Per quod pactum?	By what pact?
R. Per flores.	By flowers.
D. Quales?	What flowers?
R. Rosas.	Roses.
D. Quis misit?	By whom wert thou sent?

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At this question the magistrates remarked that the superior hesitated to reply; twice she opened her mouth in vain, but the third time she said in a weak voice—

D. Dic cognomen?	What is his surname?
R. Urbanus.	Urbain.

Here there was again the same hesitation, but as if impelled by the will of the exorcist she answered—

R. Grandier.	Grandier.
D. Dic qualitatem?	What is his profession?
R. Sacerdos.	A priest.
D. Cujus ecclesiæ?	Of what church?
R. Sancti Petri.	Saint-Pierre.
D. Quae persona attulit flores?	Who brought the flowers?
R. Diabolica.	Someone sent by the devil.

As the patient pronounced the last word she recovered her senses, and having repeated a prayer, attempted to swallow a morsel of bread which was offered her; she was, however, obliged to spit it out, saying it was so dry she could not get it down.

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Something more liquid was then brought, but even of that she could swallow very little, as she fell into convulsions every few minutes.

Upon this the two officials, seeing there was nothing more to be got out of the superior, withdrew to one of the window recesses and began to converse in a low tone; whereupon Mignon, who feared that they had not been sufficiently impressed, followed them, and drew their attention to the fact that there was much in what they had just seen to recall the case of Gaufredi, who had been put to death a few years before in consequence of a decree of the Parliament of Aix, in Provence. This ill-judged remark of Mignon showed so clearly what his aim was that the magistrates made no reply. The civil lieutenant remarked that he had been surprised that Mignon had not made any attempt to find out the *cause* of the *enmity* of which the superior had spoken, and which it was so important to find out; but Mignon excused himself by saying that he had no right to put questions merely to gratify curiosity. The civil lieutenant was about to insist on the matter being investigated, when the lay sister in her turn went into a fit, thus extricating Mignon from his embarrassment. The magistrates approached the lay sister's bed at once, and directed Mignon to put the same questions to her as to the superior: he did so, but all in vain; all

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she would reply was, "To the other! To the other!"

Mignon explained this refusal to answer by saying that the evil spirit which was in her was of an inferior order, and referred all questioners to Ashtaroth, who was his superior. As this was the only explanation, good or bad, offered them by Mignon, the magistrates went away, and drew up a report of all they had seen and heard without comment, merely appending their signatures.

But in the town very few people showed the same discretion and reticence as the magistrates. The bigoted believed, the hypocrites pretended to believe; and the wordly-minded, who were numerous, discussed the doctrine of possession in all its phases, and made no secret of their own entire incredulity. They wondered, and not without reason it must be confessed, what had induced the devils to go out of the nuns' bodies for two days only, and then come back and resume possession, to the confusion of the exorcists; further, they wanted to know why the mother superior's devil spoke Latin, while the lay sister's was ignorant of that tongue; for a mere difference of rank in the hierarchy of hell did not seem a sufficient explanation of such a difference in education; Mignon's refusal to go on with his interrogations as to the cause of the enmity made them, they said, suspect that, knowing he had

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reached the end of Ashtaroth's classical knowledge, he felt it useless to try to continue the dialogue in the Ciceronian idiom. Moreover, it was well known that only a few days before all Urbain's worst enemies had met in conclave in the village of Puidardane; and besides, how stupidly Mignon had shown his hand by mentioning Gaufredi, the priest who had been executed at Aix: lastly, why had not a desire for impartiality been shown by calling in other than Carmelite monks to be present at the exorcism, that order having a private quarrel with Grandier? It must be admitted that this way of looking at the case was not wanting in shrewdness.

On the following day, October 12th, the bailiff and the civil lieutenant, having heard that exorcisms had been again tried without their having been informed beforehand, requested a certain Canon Rousseau to accompany them, and set out with him and their clerk for the convent. On arriving, they asked for Mignon, and on his appearance they told him that this matter of exorcism was of such importance that no further steps were to be taken in it without the authorities being present, and that in future they were to be given timely notice of every attempt to get rid of the evil spirits. They added that this was all the more necessary as Mignon's position as director of the sisterhood and his well-known hate for Grandier would draw suspicions on him un-

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worthy of his cloth, suspicions which he ought to be the first to wish to see dissipated, and that quickly; and that, therefore, the work which he had so piously begun would be completed by exorcists appointed by the court.

Mignon replied that, though he had not the slightest objection to the magistrates being present at all the exorcisms, yet he could not promise that the spirits would reply to anyone except himself and Barré. Just at that moment Barré came on the scene, paler and more gloomy than ever, and speaking with the air of a man whose word no one could help believing, he announced that before their arrival some most extraordinary things had taken place. The magistrates asked what things, and Barré replied that he had learned from the mother superior that she was possessed, not by one, but by seven devils, of whom Ashtaroth was the chief; that Grandier had entrusted his pact with the devil, under the symbol of a bunch of roses, to a certain Jean Pivart, to give to a girl who had introduced it into the convent garden by throwing it over the wall; that this took place in the night between Saturday and Sunday "*horâ secundâ nocturnâ*" (two hours after midnight); that those were the very words the superior had used, but that while she readily named Pivart, she absolutely refused to give the name of the girl; that on asking what Pivart

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was, she had replied, "*Pauper magus*" (a poor magician); that he then had pressed her as to the word *magus*, and that she had replied "*Magicianus et civis*" (magician and citizen); and that just as she said those words the magistrates had arrived, and he had asked no more questions.

The two officials listened to this information with the seriousness befitting men entrusted with high judicial functions, and announced to the two priests that they proposed to visit the possessed women and witness for themselves the miracles that were taking place. The clerics offered no opposition, but said they feared that the devils were fatigued and would refuse to reply; and, in fact, when the officials reached the sickroom the two patients appeared to have regained some degree of calm. Mignon took advantage of this quiet moment to say mass, to which the two magistrates listened devoutly and tranquilly, and while the sacrifice was being offered the demons did not dare to move. It was expected that they would offer some opposition at the elevation of the Host, but exerything passed off without disturbance, only the lay sister's hands and feet twitched a great deal; and this was the only fact which the magistrates thought worthy of mention in their report for that morning. Barré assured them, however, that if they would return about three o'clock the devils would probably have recovered

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sufficiently from their fatigue to give a second performance.

As the two gentlemen had determined to see the affair to the end, they returned to the convent at the hour named, accompanied by Messire Irénée de Sainte-Marthe, sieur Deshumeaux; and found the room in which the possessed were lying full of curious spectators; for the exorcists had been true prophets—the devils were at work again.

The superior, as always, was the more tormented of the two, as was only to be expected, she having seven devils in her all at once; she was terribly convulsed, and was writhing and foaming at the mouth as if she were mad. No one could long continue in such a condition without serious injury to health; Barré therefore asked the devil-in-chief how soon he would come out. "*Cras manè*" (To-morrow morning), he replied. The exorcist then tried to hurry him, asking him why he would not come out at once; whereupon the superior murmured the word "*Pactum*" (A pact); and then "*Sacerdos*" (A priest), and finally "*Finis,*" or "*Finit,*" for even those nearest could not catch the word distinctly, as the devil, afraid doubtless of perpetrating a barbarism, spoke through the nun's closely clenched teeth. This being all decidedly unsatisfying, the magistrates insisted that the examination should continue, but the devils had again exhausted them-

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selves, and refused to utter another word. The priest even tried touching the superior's head with the pyx, while prayers and litanies were recited, but it was all in vain, except that some of the spectators thought that the contortions of the patient became more violent when the intercessions of certain saints were invoked, as for instance Saints Augustine, Jerome, Antony, and Mary Magdalene. Barré next directed the mother superior to dedicate her heart and soul to God, which she did without difficulty; but when he commanded her to dedicate her body also, the chief devil indicated by fresh convulsions that he was not going to allow himself to be deprived of a domicile without resistance, and made those who had heard him say that he would leave the next morning feel that he had only said so under compulsion; and their curiosity as to the result became heightened. At length, however, despite the obstinate resistance of the demon, the superior succeeded in dedicating her body also to God, and thus victorious her features resumed their usual expression, and smiling as if nothing had happened, she turned to Barré and said that there was no vestige of Satan left in her. The civil lieutenant then asked her if she remembered the questions she had been asked and the answers she had given, but she replied that she remembered nothing; but afterwards, having taken some refreshment, she said to those around

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her that she recollected perfectly how the first possession, over which Mignon had triumphed, had taken place: one evening about ten o'clock, while several nuns were still in her room, although she was already in bed, it seemed to her that someone took her hand and laid something in it, closing her fingers; at that instant she felt a sharp pain as if she had been pricked by three pins, and hearing her scream, the nuns came to her bedside to ask what ailed her. She held out her hand, and they found three black thorns sticking in it, each having made a tiny wound. Just as she had told this tale, the lay sister, as if to prevent all commentary, was seized with convulsions, and Barré recommenced his prayers and exorcisms, but was soon interrupted by shrieks; for one of the persons present had seen a black cat come down the chimney and disappear. Instantly everyone concluded it must be the devil, and began to seek it out. It was not without great difficulty that it was caught; for, terrified at the sight of so many people and at the noise, the poor animal had sought refuge under a canopy; but at last it was secured and carried to the superior's bedside, where Barré began his exorcisms once more, covering the cat with signs of the cross, and adjuring the devil to take his true shape. Suddenly the *tourière,* (the woman who received the tradespeople,) came forward, declaring the supposed devil to be only her

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cat, and she immediately took possession of it, lest some harm should happen to it.

The gathering had been just about to separate, but Barré fearing that the incident of the cat might throw a ridiculous light upon the evil spirits, resolved to awake once more a salutary terror by announcing that he was going to burn the flowers through which the second spell had been made to work. Producing a bunch of white roses, already faded, he ordered a lighted brazier to be brought. He then threw the flowers on the glowing charcoal, and to the general astonishment they were consumed without any visible effect: the heavens still smiled, no peal of thunder was heard, and no unpleasant odour diffused itself through the room. Barré feeling that the baldness of this act of destruction had had a bad effect, predicted that the morrow would bring forth wondrous things; that the chief devil would speak more distinctly than hitherto; that he would leave the body of the superior, giving such clear signs of his passage that no one would dare to doubt any longer that it was a case of genuine possession. Thereupon the criminal lieutenant, Réné Hervé, who had been present during the exorcism, said they must seize upon the moment of his exit to ask about Pivart, who was unknown at Loudun, although everyone who lived there knew everybody else. Barré replied in Latin, "*Et hoc dicet et*

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puellam nominabit" (He will not only tell about him, but he will also name the young girl). The young girl whom the devil was to name was, it may be recollected, she who had introduced the flowers into the convent, and whose name the demon until now had absolutely refused to give. On the strength of these promises everyone went home to await the morrow with impatience.

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CHAPTER IV.

THAT evening Grandier asked the bailiff for an audience. At first he had made fun of the exorcisms, for the story had been so badly concocted, and the accusations were so glaringly improbable, that he had not felt the least anxiety. But as the case went on it assumed such an important aspect, and the hatred displayed by his enemies was so intense, that the fate of the priest Gaufredi, referred to by Mignon, occurred to Urbain's mind, and in order to be beforehand with his enemies he determined to lodge a complaint against them. This complaint was founded on the fact that Mignon had performed the rite of exorcism in the presence of the civil lieutenant, the bailiff, and many other persons, and had caused the nuns who were said to be possessed, in the hearing of all these people, to name him, Urbain, as the author of their possession. This being a falsehood and an attack upon his honour, he begged the bailiff, in whose hands the conduct of the affair had been specially placed, to order the nuns to be sequestered, apart from the rest of the sisterhood and from each other, and then to have

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each separately examined. Should there appear to be any evidence of possession, he hoped that the bailiff would be pleased to appoint clerics of well-known rank and upright character to perform whatever exorcisms were needful; such men having no bias against him would be more impartial than Mignon and his adherents. He also called upon the bailiff to have an exact report drawn up of everything that took place at the exorcisms, in order that, if necessary, he as petitioner might be able to lay it before anyone to whose judgment he might appeal. The bailiff gave Grandier a statement of the conclusions at which he had arrived, and told him that the exorcisms had been performed that day by Barré, armed with the authority of the Bishop of Poitiers himself. Being, as we have seen, a man of common sense and entirely unprejudiced in the matter, the bailiff advised Grandier to lay his complaint before his bishop; but unfortunately he was under the authority of the Bishop of Poitiers, who was so prejudiced against him that he had done everything in his power to induce the Archbishop of Bordeaux to refuse to ratify the decision in favour of Grandier, pronounced by the presidial court. Urbain could not hide from the magistrate that he had nothing to hope for from this quarter, and it was decided that he should wait and see what the morrow would bring forth, before taking any further step.

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The impatiently expected day dawned at last, and at eight o'clock in the morning the bailiff, the king's attorney, the civil lieutenant, the criminal lieutenant, and the provost's lieutenant, with their respective clerks, were already at the convent. They found the outer gate open, but the inner door shut. In a few moments Mignon came to them and brought them into a waiting-room. There he told them that the nuns were preparing for communion, and that he would be very much obliged to them if they would withdraw and wait in a house across the street, just opposite the convent, and that he would send them word when they could come back. The magistrates, having first informed Mignon of Urbain's petition, retired as requested.

An hour passed, and as Mignon did not summon them, in spite of his promise, they all went together to the convent chapel, where they were told the exorcisms were already over. The nuns had quitted the choir, and Mignon and Barré came to the grating and told them that they had just completed the rite, and that, thanks to their conjurations, the two afflicted ones were now quite free from evil spirits. They went on to say that they had been working together at the exorcism from seven o'clock in the morning, and that great wonders, of which they had drawn up an account, had come to pass; but they had considered it would not be proper to allow any-

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one else to be present during the ceremony besides the exorcists and the possessed. The bailiff pointed out that their manner of proceedings was not only illegal, but that it laid them under suspicion of fraud and collusion, in the eyes of the impartial. Moreover, as the superior had accused Grandier publicly, she was bound to renew and prove her accusation also publicly, and not in secret; furthermore, it was a great piece of insolence on the part of the exorcists to invite people of their standing and character to come to the convent, and having kept them waiting an hour, to tell them that they considered them unworthy to be admitted to the ceremony which they had been requested to attend; and he wound up by saying that he would draw up a report, as he had already done on each of the preceding days, setting forth the extraordinary discrepancy between their promises and their performance. Mignon replied that he and Barré had had only one thing in view, viz. the expulsion of the demons, and that in that they had succeeded, and that their success would be of great benefit to the holy Catholic faith, for they had got the demons so thoroughly into their power that they had been able to command them to produce within a week miraculous proofs of the spells cast on the nuns by Urbain Grandier and their wonderful deliverance therefrom, so that in future no one would be able to doubt as to the real-

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ity of the possession. Thereupon the magistrates drew up a report of all that had happened, and of what Barré and Mignon had said. This was signed by all the officials present, except the criminal lieutenant, who declared that, having perfect confidence in the statements of the exorcists, he was anxious to do nothing to increase the doubting spirit which was unhappily so prevalent among the worldly.

The same day the bailiff secretly warned Urbain of the refusal of the criminal lieutenant to join with the others in signing the report, and almost at the same moment he learned that the cause of his adversaries was strengthened by the adhesion of a certain Messire René Memin, seigneur de Silly, and prefect of the town. This gentleman was held in great esteem not only on account of his wealth and the many offices which he filled, but above all on account of his powerful friends, among whom was the cardinal-duke himself, to whom he had formerly been of use when the cardinal was only a prior. The character of the conspiracy had now become so alarming that Grandier felt it was time to oppose it with all his strength. Recalling his conversation with the bailiff the preceding day, during which he had advised him to lay his complaint before the Bishop of Poitiers, he set out, accompanied by a priest of Loudun, named Jean Buron, for the prelate's country house at Dissay. The bishop, antici-

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pating his visit, had already given his orders, and Grandier was met by Dupuis, the intendant of the palace, who, in reply to Grandier's request to see the bishop, told him that his lordship was ill. Urbain next addressed himself to the bishop's chaplain, and begged him to inform the prelate that his object in coming was to lay before him the official reports which the magistrates had drawn up of the events which had taken place at the Ursuline convent, and to lodge a complaint as to the slanders and accusations of which he was the victim. Grandier spoke so urgently that the chaplain could not refuse to carry his message; he returned, however, in a few moments, and told Grandier, in the presence of Dupuis, Buron, and a certain sieur Labrasse, that the bishop advised him to take his case to the royal judges, and that he earnestly hoped he would obtain justice from them. Grandier perceived that the bishop had been warned against him, and felt that he was becoming more and more entangled in the net of conspiracy around him; but he was not a man to flinch before any danger. He therefore returned immediately to Loudun, and went once more to the bailiff, to whom he related all that had happened at Dissay; he then, a second time, made a formal complaint as to the slanders circulated with regard to him, and begged the magistrates to have recourse to the king's courts in the business. He

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also said that he desired to be placed under the protection of the king and his justice, as the accusations made against him were aimed at his honour and his life. The bailiff hastened to make out a certificate of Urbain's protest, which forbade at the same time the repetition of the slanders or the infliction on Urbain of any injury.

Thanks to this document, a change of parts took place: Mignon, the accuser, became the accused. Feeling that he had powerful support behind him, he had the audacity to appear before the bailiff the same day. He said that he did not acknowledge his jurisdiction, as in what concerned Grandier and himself, they being both priests, they could only be judged by their bishop; he nevertheless protested against the complaint lodged by Grandier, which characterised him as a slanderer, and declared that he was ready to give himself up as a prisoner, in order to show everyone that he did not fear the result of any inquiry. Furthermore, he had taken an oath on the sacred elements the day before, in the presence of his parishioners who had come to mass, that in all he had hitherto done he had been moved, not by hatred of Grandier, but by love of the truth, and by his desire for the triumph of the Catholic faith; and he insisted that the bailiff should give him a certificate of his declaration, and served notice of the same on Grandier that very day.

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CHAPTER V

SINCE October 13th, the day on which the demons had been expelled, life at the convent seemed to have returned to its usual quiet; but Grandier did not let himself be lulled to sleep by the calm: he knew those with whom he was contending too well to imagine for an instant that he would hear no more of them; and when the bailiff expressed pleasure at this interval of repose, Grandier said that it would not last long, as the nuns were only conning new parts, in order to carry on the drama in a more effective manner than ever. And in fact, on November 22nd, Renè Mannouri, surgeon to the convent, was sent to one of his colleagues, named Gaspard Joubert, to beg him to come, bringing some of the physicians of the town with him, to visit the two sisters, who were again tormented by evil spirits. Mannouri, however, had gone to the wrong man, for Joubert had a frank and loyal character, and hated everything that was underhand. Being determined to take no part in the business, except in a public and judicial manner, he applied at once to the bailiff to know if it was by

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his orders that he was called in. The bailiff said it was not, and summoned Mannouri before him to ask him by whose authority he had sent for Joubert. Mannouri declared that the *tourière* had run in a fright to his house, saying that the nuns had never been worse possessed than now, and that the director, Mignon, begged him to come at once to the convent, bringing with him all the doctors he could find.

The bailiff, seeing that fresh plots against Grandier were being formed, sent for him and warned him that Barré had come over from Chinon the day before, and had resumed his exorcisms at the convent, adding that it was currently reported in the town that the mother superior and Sister Claire were again tormented by devils. The news neither astonished nor discouraged Grandier, who replied, with his usual smile of disdain, that it was evident his enemies were hatching new plots against him, and that as he had instituted proceedings against them for the former ones, he would take the same course with regard to these. At the same time, knowing how impartial the bailiff was, he begged him to accompany the doctors and officials to the convent, and to be present at the exorcisms, and should any sign of real possession manifest itself, to sequester the afflicted nuns at once, and cause them to be examined by other persons than Mignon and Barré, whom he had such good cause to distrust.

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The bailiff wrote to the king's attorney, who, notwithstanding his bias against Grandier, was forced to see that the conclusions arrived at were correct, and having certified this in writing, he at once sent his clerk to the convent to inquire if the superior were still possessed. In case of an affirmative reply being given, the clerk had instructions to warn Mignon and Barré that they were not to undertake exorcisms unless in presence of the bailiff and of such officials and doctors as he might choose to bring with him, and that they would disobey at their peril; he was also to tell them that Grandier's demands to have the nuns sequestered and other exorcists called in were granted.

Mignon and Barré listened while the clerk read his instructions, and then said they refused to recognise the jurisdiction of the bailiff in this case; that they had been summoned by the mother superior and Sister Claire when their strange illness returned, an illness which they were convinced was nothing else than possession by evil spirits; that they had hitherto carried out their exorcisms under the authority of a commission given them by the Bishop of Poitiers; and as the time for which they had permission had not yet expired, they would continue to exorcise as often as might be necessary. They had, however, given notice to the worthy prelate of what was going on, in order that he might either come

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himself or send other exorcists as best suited him, so that a valid opinion as to the reality of the possession might be procured, for up to the present the worldly and unbelieving had taken upon themselves to declare in an off-hand manner that the whole affair was a mixture of fraud and delusion, in contempt of the glory of God and the Catholic religion. As to the rest of the message, they would not in any way prevent the bailiff and the other officials, with as many medical men as they chose to bring, from seeing the nuns, at least until they heard from the bishop, from whom they expected a letter next day. But it was for the nuns themselves to say whether it was convenient for them to receive visitors; as far as concerned themselves, they desired to renew their protest, and declared they could not accept the bailiff as their judge, and did not think that it could be legal for them to refuse to obey a command from their ecclesiastical superiors, whether with relation to exorcism or any other thing of which the ecclesiastical courts properly took cognisance. The clerk brought this answer to the bailiff, and he, thinking it was better to wait for the arrival of the bishop or of fresh orders from him, put off his visit to the convent until the next day. But the next day came without anything being heard of the prelate himself or of a messenger from him.

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Early in the morning the bailiff went to the convent, but was not admitted; he then waited patiently until noon, and seeing that no news had arrived from Dissay, and that the convent gates were still closed against him, he granted a second petition of Grandier's, to the effect that Barré and Mignon should be prohibited from questioning the superior and the other nuns in a manner tending to blacken the character of the petitioner or any other person. Notice of this prohibition was served the same day on Barré and on one nun chosen to represent the community. Barré did not pay the slightest attention to this notice, but kept on asserting that the bailiff had no right to prevent his obeying the commands of his bishop, and declaring that henceforward he would perform all exorcisms solely under ecclesiastical sanction, without any reference to lay persons, whose unbelief and impatience impaired the solemnity with which such rites should be conducted.

The best part of the day having gone over without any sign of either bishop or messenger, Grandier presented a new petition to the bailiff. The bailiff at once summoned all the officers of the bailiwick and the attorneys of the king, in order to lay it before them; but the king's attorneys refused to consider the matter, declaring upon their honour that although they did not accuse Grandier of being the

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cause, yet they believed that the nuns were veritably possessed, being convinced by the testimony of the devout ecclesiastics in whose presence the evil spirits had come out. This was only the ostensible reason for their refusal, the real one being that the advocate was a relation of Mignon's, and the attorney a son-in-law of Trinquant's, to whose office he had succeeded. Thus Grandier, against whom were all the ecclesiastical judges, began to feel as if he were condemned beforehand by the judges of the royal courts, for he knew how very short was the interval between the recognition of the possession as a fact and the recognition of himself as its author.

Nevertheless, in spite of the formal declarations of the king's advocate and attorney, the bailiff ordered the superior and the lay sister to be removed to houses in town, each to be accompanied by a nun as companion. During their absence from the convent they were to be looked after by exorcists, by women of high character and position, as well as by physicians and attendants, all of whom he himself would appoint, all others being forbidden access to the nuns without his permission.

The clerk was again sent to the convent with a copy of this decision, but the superior having listened to the reading of the document, answered that in her own name and that of the sisterhood she refused to recognise the jurisdiction of the bailiff;

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that she had already received directions from the Bishop of Poitiers, dated 18th November, explaining the measures which were to be taken in the matter, and she would gladly send a copy of these directions to the bailiff, to prevent his pleading ignorance of them; furthermore, she demurred to the order for her removal, having vowed to live always secluded in a convent, and that no one could dispense her from this vow but the bishop. This protest having been made in the presence of Madame de Charnisay, aunt of two of the nuns, and Surgeon Mannouri, who was related to another, they both united in drawing up a protest against violence, in case the bailiff should insist on having his orders carried out, declaring that, should he make the attempt, they would resist him, as if he were a mere private individual. This document being duly signed and witnessed was immediately sent to the bailiff by the hand of his own clerk, whereupon the bailiff ordered that preparations should be made with regard to the sequestration, and announced that the next day, the 24th November, he would repair to the convent and be present at the exorcisms.

The next day accordingly, at the appointed hour, the bailiff summoned Daniel Roger, Vincent de Faux, Gaspard Joubert, and Matthieu Fanson, all four physicians, to his presence, and acquainting them with his reasons for having called them, asked

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them to accompany him to the convent to examine, with the most scrupulous impartiality, two nuns whom he would point out, in order to discover if their illness were feigned, or arose from natural or supernatural causes. Having thus instructed them as to his wishes, they all set out for the convent.

They were shown into the chapel and placed close to the altar, being separated by a grating from the choir, in which the nuns who sang usually sat. In a few moments the superior was carried in on a small bed, which was laid down before the grating. Barré then said mass, during which the superior went into violent convulsions. She threw her arms about, her fingers were clenched, her cheeks enormously inflated, and her eyes turned up so that only the whites could be seen.

The mass finished, Barré approached her to administer the holy communion and to commence the exorcism. Holding the holy wafer in his hand, he said—

"*Adora Deum tuum, creatorem tuum*" (Adore God, thy Creator).

The superior hesitated, as if she found great difficulty in making this act of love, but at length she said—

"*Adoro te*" (I adore Thee).

"*Quem adoras?*" (Whom dost thou adore?)

"*Jesus Christus*" (Jesus Christ), answered the

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nun, quite unconscious that the verb *adoro* governs accusative.

This mistake, which no sixth-form boy would make, gave rise to bursts of laughter in the church; and Daniel Douin, the provost's assessor, was constrained to say aloud—

"There's a devil for you, who does not know much about transitive verbs."

Barré perceiving the bad impression that the superior's nominative had made, hastened to ask her—

"*Quis est iste quem adoras?*" (Who is it whom thou dost adore?)

His hope was that she would again reply "*Jesus Christus,*" but he was disappointed.

"*Jesu Christe,*" was her answer.

Renewed shouts of laughter greeted this infraction of one of the most elementary rules of syntax, and several of those present exclaimed—

"Oh, your reverence, what very poor Latin!"

Barré pretended not to hear, and next asked what was the name of the demon who had taken possession of her. The poor superior, who was greatly confused by the unexpected effect of her last two answers, could not speak for a long time; but at length with great trouble she brought out the name *Asmodée,* without daring to latinise it. The exorcist then inquired how many devils the superior had

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in her body, and to this question she replied quite fluently—

"*Sex*" (Six).

The bailiff upon this requested Barré to ask the chief devil how many evil spirits he had with him. But the need for this answer had been foreseen, and the nun unhesitatingly returned—

"*Quinque*" (Five).

This answer raised *Asmodée* somewhat in the opinion of those present, but when the bailiff adjured the superior to repeat in Greek what she had just said in Latin she made no reply, and on the adjuration being renewed she immediately recovered her senses.

The examination of the superior being thus cut short, a litle nun who appeared for the first time in public was brought forward. She began by twice pronouncing the name of Grandier with a loud laugh; then turning to the bystanders, called out—

"For all your number, you can do nothing worth while."

As it was easy to see that nothing of importance was to be expected from this new patient, she was soon suppressed, and her place taken by the lay sister Claire who had already made her *début* in the mother superior's room.

Hardly had she entered the choir than she uttered a groan, but as soon as they placed her on the

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little bed on which the other nuns had lain, she gave way to uncontrollable laughter, and cried out between the paroxysms—

"Grandier, Grandier, you must buy some at the market."

Barré at once declared that these wild and whirling words were a proof of possession, and approached to exorcise the demon; but Sister Claire resisted, and pretending to spit in the face of the exorcist, put out her tongue at him, making indecent guestures, using a word in harmony with her actions. This word being in the vernacular was understood by everyone and required no interpretation.

The exorcist then conjured her to give the name of the demon who was in her, and she replied—

"*Grandier.*"

But Barré by repeating his question gave her to understand that she had made a mistake, whereupon she corrected herself and said—

"*Elimi.*"

Nothing in the world could induce her to reveal the number of evil spirits by whom *Elimi* was accompanied, so that Barré, seeing that it was useless to press her on this point, passed on to the next question.

"*Quo pacto ingressus est daemon?*" (By what pact did the demon get in?)

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"*Duplex*" (Double), returned Sister Claire.

This horror of the ablative, when the ablative was absolutely necessary, aroused once more the hilarity of the audience, and proved that Sister Claire's devil was just as poor a Latin scholar as the superior's, and Barré, fearing some new linguistic eccentricity on the part of the evil spirit, adjourned the meeting to another day.

The paucity of learning shown in the answers of the nuns being sufficient to convince any fair-minded person that the whole affair was a ridiculous comedy, the bailiff felt encouraged to persevere until he had unravelled the whole plot. Consequently, at three o'clock in the afternoon, he returned to the convent, accompanied by his clerk, by several magistrates, and by a considerable number of the best known people of Loudun, and asked to see the superior. Being admitted, he announced to Barré that he had come to insist on the superior being separated from Sister Claire, so that each could be exorcised apart. Barré dared not refuse before such a great number of witnesses, therefore the superior was isolated and the exorcisms begun all over again. Instantly the convulsions returned, just as in the morning, only that now she twisted her feet into the form of hooks, which was a new accomplishment.

Having adjured her several times, the exorcist

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succeeded in making her repeat some prayers, and then sounded her as to the name and number of the demons in possession, whereupon she said three times that there was one called *Achaos*. The bailiff then directed Barré to ask if she were possessed *ex pacto magi, aut ex pura voluntate Dei* (by a pact with a sorcerer or by the pure will of God), to which the superior answered—

"*Non est voluntas Dei*" (Not by the will of God).

Upon this, Barré dreading more questions from the bystanders, hastily resumed his own catechism by asking who was the sorcerer.

"*Urbanus*," answered the superior.

"*Est-ne Urbanus papa?*" (Is it Pope Urban?), asked the exorcist.

"*Grandier*," replied the superior.

"*Quare ingressus es in corpus hujus puellae?*" (Why did you enter the body of this maiden?), said Barré.

"*Propter praesentiam tuum*" (Because of your presence), answered the superior.

At this point the bailiff, seeing no reason why the dialogue between Barré and the superior should ever come to an end, interposed and demanded that questions suggested by him and the other officials present should be put to the superior, promising that if she answered three of four such questions cor-

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rectly, he, and those with him, would believe in the reality of the possession, and would certify to that effect. Barré accepted the challenge, but unluckily just at that moment the superior regained consciousness, and as it was already late, everyone retired.

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CHAPTER VI

THE next day, November 25th, the bailiff and the majority of the officers of the two jurisdictions came to the convent once more, and were all conducted to the choir. In a few moments the curtains behind the grating were drawn back, and the superior, lying on her bed, came to view. Barré began, as usual, by the celebration of mass, during which the superior was seized with convulsions, and exclaimed two or three times, "Grandier! Grandier! false priest!" When the mass was over, the celebrant went behind the grating, carrying the pyx; then, placing it on his head and holding it there, he protested that in all he was doing he was actuated by the purest motives and the highest integrity; that he had no desire to harm anyone on earth; and he adjured God to strike him dead if he had been guilty of any bad action or collusion, or had instigated the nuns to any deceit during the investigation.

The prior of the Carmelites next advanced and made the same declaration, taking the oath in the same manner, holding the pyx over his head; and

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further calling down on himself and his brethren the curse of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram if they had sinned during this inquiry. These protestations did not, however, produce the salutary effect intended, some of those present saying aloud that such oaths smacked of sacrilege.

Barré hearing the murmurs, hastened to begin the exorcisms, first advancing to the superior to offer her the holy sacrament: but as soon as she caught sight of him she became terribly convulsed, and attempted to drag the pyx from his hands. Barré, however, by pronouncing the sacred words, overcame the repulsion of the superior, and succeeded in placing the wafer in her mouth; she, however, pushed it out again with her tongue, as if it made her sick; Barré caught it in his fingers and gave it to her again, at the same time forbidding the demon to make her vomit, and this time she succeeded in partly swallowing the sacred morsel, but complained that it stuck in her throat. At last, in order to get it down, Barré three times gave her water to drink; and then, as always during his exorcisms, he began by interrogating the demon.

"*Per quod pactum ingressus es in corpus hujus puellae?*" (By what pact didst thou enter the body of this maiden?)

"*Aquâ*" (By water), said the superior.

One of those who had accompanied the bailiff

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was a Scotchman called Stracan, the head of the Reformed College of Loudun. Hearing this answer, he called on the demon to translate *aquâ* into Gaelic, saying if he gave this proof of having those linguistic attainments which all bad spirits possess, he and those with him would be convinced that the possession was genuine and no deception. Barré, without being in the least taken aback, replied that he would make the demon say it if God permitted, and ordered the spirit to answer in Gaelic. But though he repeated his command twice, it was not obeyed; on the third repetition the superior said—

"*Nimia curiositas*" (Too much curiosity), and on being asked again, said—

"*Deus non volo.*"

This time the poor devil went astray in his conjugation, and confusing the first with the third person, said, "God, I do not wish," which in the context had no meaning. "God does not wish," being the appointed answer.

The Scotchman laughed heartily at this nonsense, and proposed to Barré to let his devil enter into competition with the boys of his seventh form; but Barré, instead of frankly accepting the challenge in the devil's name, hemmed and hawed, and opined that the devil was justified in not satisfying idle curiosity.

"But, sir, you must be aware," said the civil

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lieutenant, "and if you are not, the manual you hold in your hand will teach you, that the gift of tongues is one of the unfailing symptoms of true possession, and the power to tell what is happening at a distance another."

"Sir," returned Barré, "the devil knows the language very well, but does not wish to speak it; he also knows all your sins, in proof of which, if you so desire, I shall order him to give the list."

"I shall be delighted to hear it," said the civil lieutenant; "be so good as to try the experiment."

Barré was about to approach the superior, when he was held back by the bailiff, who remonstrated with him on the impropriety of his conduct, whereupon Barré assured the magistrate that he had never really intended to do as he threatened.

However, in spite of all Barré's attempts to distract the attention of the bystanders from the subject, they still persisted in desiring to discover the extent of the devil's knowledge of foreign languages, and at their suggestion the bailiff proposed to Barré to try him in Hebrew instead of Gaelic. Hebrew being, according to Scripture, the most ancient language of all, ought to be familiar to the demon, unless indeed he had forgotten it. This idea met with such general applause that Barré was forced to command the possessed nun to say *aqua*

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in Hebrew. The poor woman, who found it difficult enough to repeat correctly the few Latin words she had learned by rote, made an impatient movement, and said—

"I can't help it; I retract" (*Je renie*).

These words being heard and repeated by those near her produced such an unfavourable impression that one of the Carmelite monks tried to explain them away by declaring that the superior had not said "*Je renie*," but "*Zaquar*," a Hebrew word corresponding to the two Latin words, "*Effudi aquam*" (I threw water about). But the words "*Je renie*" had been heard so distinctly that the monk's assertion was greeted with jeers, and the sub-prior reprimanded him publicly as a liar. Upon this, the superior had a fresh attack of convulsions, and as all present knew that these attacks usually indicated that the performance was about to end, they withdrew, making very merry over a devil who knew neither Hebrew nor Gaelic, and whose smattering of Latin was so incorrect.

However, as the bailiff and civil lieutenant were determined to clear up every doubt so far as they still felt any, they went once again to the convent at three o'clock the same afternoon. Barré came out to meet them, and took them for a stroll in the convent grounds. During their walk he said to the civil lieutenant that he felt very much surprised that he,

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who had on a former occasion, by order of the Bishop of Poitiers, laid information against Grandier should be now on his side. The civil lieutenant replied that he would be ready to inform against him again if there were any justification, but at present his object was to arrive at the truth, and in this he felt sure he should be successful. Such an answer was very unsatisfactory to Barré; so, drawing the bailiff aside, he remarked to him that a man among whose ancestors were many persons of condition, several of whom had held positions of much dignity in the Church, and who himself held such an important judicial position, ought to show less incredulity in regard to the possibility of a devil entering into a human body, since if it were proved it would redound to the glory of God and the good of the Church and of religion. The bailiff received this remonstrance with marked coldness, and replied that he hoped always to take justice for his guide, as his duty commanded. Upon this, Barré pursued the subject no farther, but led the way to the superior's apartment.

Just as they entered the room, where a large number of people were already gathered, the superior, catching sight of the pyx which Barré had brought with him, fell once more into convulsions. Barré went towards her, and having asked the demon as usual by what pact he had entered the maiden's body,

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and received the information that it was by water, continued his examination as follows:—

"*Quis finis pacti?*" (What is the object of this pact?)

"*Impuritas*" (Unchastity).

At these words the bailiff interrupted the exorcist and ordered him to make the demon say in Greek the three words, *finis, pacti, impuritas.* But the superior, who had once already got out of her difficulties by an evasive answer, had again recourse to the same convenient phrase, "*Nimia curiositas,*" with which Barré agreed, saying that they were indeed too much given to curiosity. So the bailiff had to desist from his attempt to make the demon speak Greek, as he had before been obliged to give up trying to make him speak Hebrew and Gaelic. Barré then continued his examination.

"*Quis attulit pactum?*" (Who brought the pact?)

"*Magus*" (The sorcerer).

"*Quale nomen magi?*" (What is the sorcerer's name?)

"*Urbanus*" (Urban).

"*Quis Urbanus? Est-ne Urbanus papa?*" (What Urban? Pope Urban?)

"*Grandier.*"

"*Cujus qualitatis?*" (What is his profession?)

"*Curatus.*"

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The enriching of the Latin language by this new and unknown word produced a great effect upon the audience; however, Barré did not pause long enough to allow it to be received with all the consideration it deserved, but went on at once.

"*Quis attulit aquam pacti?*" (Who brought the water of the pact?)

"*Magus*" (The magician).

"*Quâ horâ?*" (At what o'clock?)

"*Septimâ*" (At seven o'clock).

"*An matutinâ?*" (In the morning?)

"*Serò*" (In the evening).

"*Quomodò intravit?*" (How did he enter?)

"*Januâ*" (By the door).

"*Quis vidit?*" (Who saw him?)

"*Tres*" (Three persons).

Here Barré stopped, in order to confirm the testimony of the devil, assuring his hearers that the Sunday after the superior's deliverance from the second possession he along with Mignon and one of the sisters was sitting with her at supper, it being about seven o'clock in the evening, when she showed them drops of water on her arm, and no one could tell where they came from. He had instantly washed her arm in holy water and repeated some prayers, and while he was saying them the breviary of the superior was twice dragged from her hands and thrown at his feet, and when he stooped to pick it

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up for the second time he got a box on the ear without being able to see the hand that administered it. Then Mignon came up and confirmed what Barré had said in a long discourse, which he wound up by calling down upon his head the most terrible penalties if every word he said were not the exact truth. He then dismissed the assembly, promising to drive out the evil spirit the next day, and exhorting those present to prepare themselves, by penitence and receiving the holy communion, for the contemplation of the wonders which awaited them.

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CHAPTER VII

THE last two exorcisms had been so much talked about in the town, that Grandier, although he had not been present, knew everything that had happened, down to the smallest detail, so he once more laid a complaint before the bailiff, in which he represented that the nuns maliciously continued to name him during the exorcisms as the author of their pretended possession, being evidently influenced thereto by his enemies, whereas in fact not only had he had no communication with them, but had never set eyes on them; that in order to prove that they acted under influence it was absolutely necessary that they should be sequestered, it being most unjust that Mignon and Barré, his mortal enemies, should have constant access to them and be able to stay with them night and day, their doing so making the collusion evident and undeniable; that the honour of God was involved, and also that of the petitioner, who had some right to be respected, seeing that he was first in rank among the ecclesiastics of the town.

Taking all this into consideration, he consequently

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prayed the bailiff to be pleased to order that the nuns suffering from the so-called possession should at once be separated from each other and from their present associates, and placed under the control of clerics assisted by physicians in whose impartiality the petitioner could have confidence; and he further prayed that all this should be performed in spite of any opposition or appeal whatsoever (but without prejudice to the right of appeal), because of the importance of the matter. And in case the bailiff were not pleased to order the sequestration, the petitioner would enter a protest and complaint against his refusal as a withholding of justice.

The bailiff wrote at the bottom of the petition that it would be at once complied with.

After Urbain Grandier had departed, the physicians who had been present at the exorcisms presented themselves before the bailiff, bringing their report with them. In this report they said that they had recognised convulsive movements of the mother superior's body, but that one visit was not sufficient to enable them to make a thorough diagnosis, as the movements above mentioned might arise as well from a natural as from supernatural causes; they therefore desired to be afforded opportunity for a thorough examination before being called on to pronounce an opinion. To this end they required permission to spend several days and nights uninter-

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ruptedly in the same room with the patients, and to treat them in the presence of other nuns and some of the magistrates. Further, they required that all the food and medicine should pass through the doctors' hands, and that no one should touch the patients except quite openly, or speak to them except in an audible voice. Under these conditions they would undertake to find out the true cause of the convulsions and to make a report of the same.

It being now nine o'clock in the morning, the hour when the exorcisms began, the bailiff went over at once to the convent, and found Barré half way through the mass, and the superior in convulsions. The magistrate entered the church at the moment of the elevation of the Host, and noticed among the kneeling Catholics a young man called Dessentier standing up with his hat on. He ordered him either to uncover or to go away. At this the convulsive movements of the superior became more violent, and she cried out that there were Huguenots in the church, which gave the demon great power over her. Barré asked her how many there were present, and she replied, "Two," thus proving that the devil was no stronger in arithmetic than in Latin; for besides Dessentier, Councillor Abraham Gauthier, one of his brothers, four of his sisters, René Fourneau, a deputy, and an attorney called Angevin, all of the Reformed faith, were present.

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As Barré saw that those present were greatly struck by this numerical inaccuracy, he tried to turn their thoughts in another direction by asking the superior if it were true that she knew no Latin. On her replying that she did not know a single word, he held the pyx before her and ordered her to swear by the holy sacrament. She resisted at first, saying loud enough for those around her to hear—

"My father, you make me take such solemn oaths that I fear God will punish me."

To this Barré replied—

"My daughter, you must swear for the glory of God."

And she took the oath.

Just then one of the bystanders remarked that the mother superior was in the habit of interpreting the Catechism to her scholars. This she denied, but acknowledged that she used to translate the Paternoster and the Creed for them. As the superior felt herself becoming somewhat confused at this long series of embarrassing questions, she decided on going into convulsions again, but with only moderate success, for the bailiff insisted that the exorcists should ask her where Grandier was at that very moment. Now, as the ritual teaches that one of the proofs of possession is the faculty of telling, when asked, where people are, without seeing them, and as the question was propounded in the pre-

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scribed terms, she was bound to answer, so she said that Grandier was in the great hall of the castle.

"That is not correct," said the bailiff, "for before coming here I pointed out a house to Grandier and asked him to stay in it till I came back. If anybody will go there, they will be sure to find him, for he wished to help me to discover the truth without my being obliged to resort to sequestration, which is a difficult measure to take with regard to nuns."

Barré was now ordered to send some of the monks present to the castle, accompanied by a magistrate and a clerk. Barré chose the Carmelite prior, and the bailiff Charles Chauvet, assessor of the bailiwick, Ismaël Boulieau a priest, and Pierre Thibaut, an articled clerk, who all set out at once to execute their commission, while the rest of those present were to await their return.

Meanwhile the superior, who had not spoken a word since the bailiff's declaration, remained, in spite of repeated exorcisms, dumb, so Barré sent for Sister Claire, saying that one devil would encourage the other. The bailiff entered a formal protest against this step, insisting that the only result of a double exorcism would be to cause confusion, during which suggestions might be conveyed to the superior, and that the proper thing to

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do was, before beginning new conjurations, to await the return of the messengers. Although the bailiff's suggestion was most reasonable, Barré knew better than to adopt it, for he felt that no matter what it cost he must either get rid of the bailiff and all the other officials who shared his doubts, or find means with the help of Sister Claire to delude them into belief. The lay sister was therefore brought in, in spite of the opposition of the bailiff and the other magistrates, and as they did not wish to seem to countenance a fraud, they all withdrew, declaring that they could no longer look on at such a disgusting comedy. In the courtyard they met their messengers returning, who told them they had gone first to the castle and had searched the great hall and all the other rooms without seeing anything of Grandier; they had then gone to the house mentioned by the bailiff, where they found him for whom they were looking, in the company of Père Véret, the confessor of the nuns, Mathurin Rousseau, and Nicolas Benoît, canons, and Conté, a doctor, from whom they learned that Grandier had not been an instant out of their sight for the last two hours. This being all the magistrates wanted to know, they went home, while their envoys went upstairs and told their story, which produced the effect which might be expected. Thereupon a Carmelite brother wishing to weaken the impression,

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and thinking that the devil might be more lucky in his second guess than the first, asked the superior where Grandier was just then. She answered without the slightest hesitation that he was walking with the bailiff in the church of Sainte-Croix. A new deputation was at once sent off, which finding the church empty, went on to the palace, and saw the bailiff presiding at a court. He had gone direct from the convent to the palace, and had not yet seen Grandier. The same day the nuns sent word that they would not consent to any more exorcisms being performed in the presence of the bailiff and the officials who usually accompanied him, and that for the future they were determined to answer no questions before such witnesses.

Grandier learning of this piece of insolence, which prevented the only man on whose impartiality he could reckon from being henceforward present at the exorcisms, once more handed in a petition to the bailiff, begging for the sequestration of the two nuns, no matter at what risk. The bailiff, however, in the interests of the petitioner himself, did not dare to grant this request, for he was afraid that the ecclesiastical authorities would nullify his procedure, on the ground that the convent was not under his jurisdiction.

He, however, summoned a meeting of the principal inhabitants of the town, in order to consult

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with them as to the best course to take for the public good. The conclusion they arrived at was to write to the attorney-general and to the Bishop of Poitiers, enclosing copies of the reports which had been drawn up, and imploring them to use their authority to put an end to these pernicious intrigues. This was done, but the attorney-general replied that the matter being entirely ecclesiastical the Parliament was not competent to take cognisance of it. As for the bishop, he sent no answer at all.

He was not, however, so silent towards Grandier's enemies; for the ill-success of the exorcisms of November 26th having made increased precautions necessary, they considered it would be well to apply to the bishop for a new commission, wherein he should appoint certain ecclesiastics to represent him during the exorcisms to come. Barré himself went to Poitiers to make this request. It was immediately granted, and the bishop appointed Bazile, senior canon of Champigny, and Demorans, senior canon of Thouars, both of whom were related to some of Grandier's adversaries. The following is a copy of the new commission:—

"Henri-Louis le Châtaignier de la Rochepezai, by the divine will Bishop of Poitiers, to the senior canons of the Châtelet de Saint-Pierre de Thouars et de Champigny-sur-Vèse, greeting:

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"We by these presents command you to repair to the town of Loudun, to the convent of the nuns of Sainte-Ursule, to be present at the exorcisms which will be undertaken by Sieur Barré upon some nuns of the said convent who are tormented by evil spirits, we having thereto authorised the said Barré. You are also to draw up a report of all that takes place, and for this purpose are to take any clerk you may choose with you.

"Given and done at Poitiers, November 28th, 1632.

"(*Signed*) HENRI-LOUIS, Bishop of Poitiers.

"(*Countersigned*) By order of the said Lord Bishop,

"MICHELET"

These two commissioners having been notified beforehand, went to Loudun, where Marescot, one of the queen's chaplains, arrived at the same time; for the pious queen, Anne of Austria, had heard so many conflicting accounts of the possession of the Ursuline nuns, that she desired, for her own edification, to get to the bottom of the affair. We can judge what importance the case was beginning to assume by its being already discussed at court.

In spite of the notice which had been sent them that the nuns would not receive them, the bailiff and the civil lieutenant fearing that the royal envoy would allow himself to be imposed on, and would

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draw up an account which would cast doubt on the facts contained in their reports, betook themselves to the convent on December 1st, the day on which the exorcisms were to recommence, in the presence of the new commissioners. They were accompanied by their assessor, by the provost's lieutenant, and a clerk. They had to knock repeatedly before anyone seemed to hear them, but at length a nun opened the door and told them they could not enter, being suspected of bad faith, as they had publicly declared that the possession was a fraud and an imposture. The bailiff, without wasting his time arguing with the sister, asked to see Barré, who soon appeared arrayed in his priestly vestments, and surrounded by several persons, among whom was the queen's chaplain. The bailiff complained that admittance had been refused to him and those with him, although he had been authorised to visit the convent by the Bishop of Poitiers. Barré replied that he would not hinder their coming in, as far as it concerned him.

"We are here with the intention of entering," said the bailiff, "and also for the purpose of requesting you to put one or two questions to the demon which we have drawn up in terms which are in accordance with what is prescribed in the ritual. I am sure you will not refuse," he added, turning with a bow to Marescot, "to make this experiment in

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the presence of the queen's chaplain, since by that means all those suspicions of imposture can be removed which are unfortunately so rife concerning this business."

"In that respect I shall do as I please, and not as you order me," was the insolent reply of the exorcist.

"It is, however, your duty to follow legal methods in your procedure," returned the bailiff, "if you sincerely desire the truth; for it would be an affront to God to perform a spurious miracle in His honour, and a wrong to the Catholic faith, whose power is in its truth, to attempt to give adventitious lustre to its doctrines by the aid of fraud and deception."

"Sir," said Barré, "I am a man of honour, I know my duty and I shall discharge it; but as to yourself, I must recall to your recollection that the last time you were here you left the chapel in anger and excitement, which is an attitude of mind most unbecoming in one whose duty it is to administer justice."

Seeing that these recriminations would have no practical result, the magistrates cut them short by reiterating their demand for admittance; and on this being refused, they reminded the exorcists that they were expressly prohibited from asking any questions tending to cast a slur on the character of any person or persons whatever, under pain of being

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treated as disturbers of the public peace. At this warning Barré, saying that he did not acknowledge the bailiff's jurisdiction, shut the door in the faces of the two magistrates.

As there was no time to lose if the machinations of his enemies were to be brought to nought, the bailiff and the civil lieutenant advised Grandier to write to the Archbishop of Bordeaux, who had once already extricated him from imminent danger, setting forth at length his present predicament; this letter, accompanied by the reports drawn up by the bailiff and the civil lieutenant, were sent off at once by a trusty messenger to His Grace of Escoubleau de Sourdis. As soon as he received the despatches, the worthy prelate seeing how grave was the crisis, and that the slightest delay might be fatal to Grandier, set out at once for his abbey of Saint-Jouin-les-Marmes, the place in which he had already vindicated in so striking a manner the upright character of the poor persecuted priest by a fearless act of justice.

It is not difficult to realise what a blow his arrival was to those who held a brief for the evil spirits in possession; hardly had he reached Saint-Jouin than he sent his own physician to the convent with orders to see the afflicted nuns and to test their condition, in order to judge if the convulsions were real or simulated. The physician arrived, armed

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with a letter from the archbishop, ordering Mignon to permit the bearer to make a thorough examination into the position of affairs. Mignon received the physician with all the respect due to him who sent him, but expressed great regret that he had not come a little sooner, as, thanks to his (Mignon's) exertions and those of Barré, the devils had been exorcised the preceding day. He nevertheless introduced the archbishop's envoy to the presence of the superior and Sister Claire, whose demeanour was as calm as if they had never been disturbed by any agitating experiences. Mignon's statement being thus confirmed, the doctor returned to Saint-Jouin, the only thing to which he could bear testimony being the tranquillity which reigned at the moment in the convent.

The imposture being now laid so completely bare, the archbishop was convinced that the infamous persecutions to which it had led would cease at once and for ever; but Grandier, better acquainted with the character of his adversaries, arrived on the 27th of December at the abbey and laid a petition at the archbishop's feet. In this document he set forth: that his enemies having formerly brought false and slanderous accusations against him of which, through the justice of the archbishop, he had been able to clear himself, had employed themselves during the last three months in inventing and publish-

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ing as a fact that the petitioner had sent evil spirits into the bodies of nuns in the Ursuline convent of Loudun, although he had never spoken to any of the sisterhood there; that the guardianship of the sisters who, it was alleged, were possessed, and the task of exorcism, had been entrusted to Jean Mignon and Pierre Barré, who had in the most unmistakable manner shown themselves to be the mortal enemies of the petitioner; that in the reports drawn up by the said Jean Mignon and Pierre Barré, which differed so widely from those made by the bailiff and the civil lieutenant, it was boastfully alleged that three or four times devils had been driven out, but that they had succeeded in returning and taking possession of their victims again and again, in virtue of successive pacts entered into between the prince of darkness and the petitioner; that the aim of these reports and allegations was to destroy the reputation of the petitioner and excite public opinion against him; that although the demons had been put to flight by the arrival of His Grace, yet it was too probable that as soon as he was gone they would return to the charge; that if, such being the case, the powerful support of the archbishop were not available, the innocence of the petitioner, no matter how strongly established, would by the cunning tactics of his inveterate foes be obscured and denied: he, the petitioner, therefore prayed that, should the

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foregoing reasons prove on examination to be cogent, the archbishop would be pleased to prohibit Barré, Mignon, and their partisans, whether among the secular or the regular clergy, from taking part in any future exorcisms, should such be necessary, or in the control of any persons alleged to be possessed; furthermore, petitioner prayed that His Grace would be pleased to appoint as a precautionary measure such other clerics and lay persons as seemed to him suitable, to superintend the administration of food and medicine and the rite of exorcism to those alleged to be possessed, and that all the treatment should be carried out in the presence of magistrates.

The archbishop accepted the petition, and wrote below it:—

"The present petition having been seen by us and the opinion of our attorney having been taken in the matter, we have sent the petitioner in advance of our said attorney back to Poitiers, that justice may be done him, and in the meantime we have appointed Sieur Barré, Père l'Escaye, a Jesuit residing in Poitiers, Père Gaut of the Oratory, residing at Tours, to conduct the exorcisms, should such be necessary, and have given them an order to this effect.

"It is forbidden to all others to meddle with the

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said exorcisms, on pain of being punished according to law."

It will be seen from the above that His Grace the Archbishop of Bordeaux, in his enlightened and generous exercíse of justice, had foreseen and provided for every possible contingency; so that as soon as his orders were made known to the exorcists the possession ceased at once and completely, and was no longer even talked of. Barré withdrew to Chinon, the senior canons rejoined their chapters, and the nuns, happily rescued for the time, resumed their life of retirement and tranquillity. The archbishop nevertheless urged on Grandier the prudence of effecting an exchange of benefices, but he replied that he would not at that moment change his simple living of Loudun for a bishopric.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE exposure of the plot was most prejudicial to the prosperity of the Ursuline community: spurious possession, far from bringing to their convent an increase of subscriptions and enhancing their reputation, as Mignon had promised, had ended for them in open shame, while in private they suffered from straitened circumstances, for the parents of their boarders hastened to withdraw their daughters from the convent, and the nuns in losing their pupils lost their sole source of income. Their fall in the estimation of the public filled them with despair, and it leaked out that they had had several altercations with their director, during which they reproached him for having, by making them commit such a great sin, overwhelmed them with infamy and reduced them to misery, instead of securing for them the great spiritual and temporal advantages he had promised them. Mignon, although devoured by hate, was obliged to remain quiet, but he was none the less as determined as ever to have revenge, and as he was one of those men who never give up while a gleam of hope remains, and whom no wait-

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ing can tire, he bided his time, avoiding notice, apparently resigned to circumstances, but keeping his eyes fixed on Grandier, ready to seize on the first chance of recovering possession of the prey that had escaped his hands. And unluckily the chance soon presented itself.

It was now 1633: Richelieu was at the height of his power, carrying out his work of destruction, making castles fall before him where he could not make heads fall, in the spirit of John Knox's words, "Destroy the nests and the crows will disappear." Now one of these nests was the crenellated castle of Loudun, and Richelieu had therefore ordered its demolition.

The person appointed to carry out this order was a man such as those whom Louis XI had employed fifty years earlier to destroy the feudal system, and Robespierre one hundred and fifty years later to destroy the aristocracy. Every woodman needs an axe, every reaper a sickle, and Richelieu found the instrument he required in de Laubardemont, Councillor of State.

But he was an instrument full of intelligence, detecting by the manner in which he was wielded the moving passion of the wielder, and adapting his whole nature with marvellous dexterity to gratify that passion according to the character of him whom it possessed; now by a rough and ready im-

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petuosity, now by a deliberate and hidden advance; equally willing to strike with the sword or to poison by calumny, as the man who moved him lusted for the blood or sought to accomplish the dishonour of his victim.

M. de Laubardemont arrived at Loudun during the month of August 1633, and in order to carry out his mission addressed himself to Sieur Memin de Silly, prefect of the town, that old friend of the cardinal's whom Mignon and Barré, as we have said, had impressed so favourably. Memin saw in the arrival of Laubardemont a special intimation that it was the will of Heaven that the seemingly lost cause of those in whom he took such a warm interest should ultimately triumph. He presented Mignon and all his friends to M. Laubardemont, who received them with much cordiality. They talked of the mother superior, who was a relation, as we have seen, of M. de Laubardemont, and exaggerated the insult offered her by the decree of the archbishop, saying it was an affront to the whole family; and before long the one thing alone which occupied the thoughts of the conspirators and the councillor was how best to draw down upon Grandier the anger of the cardinal-duke. A way soon opened.

The Queen mother, Marie de Médici, had among her attendants a woman called Hammon, to whom,

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having once had occasion to speak, she had taken a fancy, and given a post near her person. In consequence of this whim, Hammon came to be regarded as a person of some importance in the queen's household. Hammon was a native of Loudun, and had passed the greater part of her youth there with her own people, who belonged to the lower classes. Grandier had been her confessor, and she attended his church, and as she was lively and clever he enjoyed talking to her, so that at length an intimacy sprang up between them. It so happened at a time when he and the other ministers were in momentary disgrace, that a satire full of biting wit and raillery appeared, directed especially against the cardinal, and this satire had been attributed to Hammon, who was known to share, as was natural, her mistress's hatred of Richelieu. Protected as she was by the queen's favour, the cardinal had found it impossible to punish Hammon, but he still cherished a deep resentment against her.

It now occurred to the conspirators to accuse Grandier of being the real author of the satire; and it was asserted that he had learned from Hammon all the details of the cardinal's private life, the knowledge of which gave so much point to the attack on him; if they could once succeed in making Richelieu believe this, Grandier was lost.

This plan being decided on, M. de Laubardemont

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was asked to visit the convent, and the devils knowing what an important personage he was, flocked thither to give him a worthy welcome. Accordingly, the nuns had attacks of the most indescribably violent convulsions, and M. de Laubardemont returned to Paris convinced as to the reality of their possession.

The first word the councillor of state said to the cardinal about Urbain Grandier showed him that he had taken useless trouble in inventing the story about the satire, for by the bare mention of his name he was able to arouse the cardinal's anger to any height he wished. The fact was, that when Richelieu had been Prior of Coussay he and Grandier had had a quarrel on a question of etiquette, the latter as priest of Loudun having claimed precedence over the prior, and carried his point. The cardinal had noted the affront in his bloodstained tablets, and at the first hint de Laubardemont found him as eager to bring about Grandier's ruin as was the councillor himself.

De Laubardemont was at once granted the following commission:—

"Sieur de Laubardemont, Councillor of State and Privy Councillor, will betake himself to Loudun, and to whatever other places may be necessary, to institute proceedings against Grandier on all the

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charges formerly preferred against him, and on other facts which have since come to light, touching the possession by evil spirits of the Ursuline nuns of Loudun, and of other persons, who are said likewise to be tormented of devils through the evil practices of the said Grandier; he will diligently investigate everything from the beginning that has any bearing either on the said possession or on the exorcisms, and will forward to us his report thereon, and the reports and other documents sent in by former commissioners and delegates, and will be present at all future exorcisms, and take proper steps to obtain evidence of the said facts, that they may be clearly established; and, above all, will direct, institute, and carry through the said proceedings against Grandier and all others who have been involved with him in the said case, until definitive sentence be passed; and in spite of any appeal or countercharge this cause will not be delayed (but without prejudice to the right of appeal in other causes), on account of the nature of the crimes, and no regard will be paid to any request for postponement made by the said Grandier. His majesty commands all governors, provincial lieutenant-generals, bailiffs, seneschals, and other municipal authorities, and all subjects whom it may concern, to give every assistance in arresting and imprisoning all persons whom it may be necessary to put un-

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der constraint, if they shall be required so to do."

Furnished with this order, which was equivalent to a condemnation, de Laubardemont arrived at Loudun, the 5th of December, 1633, at nine o'clock in the evening; and to avoid being seen he alighted in a suburb at the house of one maître Paul Aubin, king's usher, and son-in-law of Memin de Silly. His arrival was kept so secret that neither Grandier nor his friends knew of it, but Memin, Hervé Menuau, and Mignon were notified, and immediately called on him. De Laubardemont received them, commission in hand, but broad as it was, it did not seem to them sufficient, for it contained no order for Grandier's arrest, and Grandier might fly. De Laubardemont, smiling at the idea that he could be so much in fault, drew from his pocket an order in duplicate, in case one copy should be lost, dated like the commission, November 30th, signed LOUIS, and countersigned PHILIPPEAUX. It was conceived in the following terms:—

"LOUIS, etc. etc.

"We have entrusted these presents to Sieur de Laubardemont, Privy Councillor, to empower the said Sieur de Laubardemont to arrest Grandier and his accomplices and imprison them in a secure place, with orders to all provosts, marshals, and other

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officers, and to all our subjects in general, to lend whatever assistance is necessary to carry out above order; and they are commanded by these presents to obey all orders given by the said Sieur; and all governors and lieutenants-general are also hereby commanded to furnish the said Sieur with whatever aid he may require at their hands."

This document being the completion of the other, it was immediately resolved, in order to show that they had the royal authority at their back, and as a preventive measure, to arrest Grandier at once, without any preliminary investigation. They hoped by this step to intimidate any official who might still be inclined to take Grandier's part, and any witness who might be disposed to testify in his favour. Accordingly, they immediately sent for Guillaume Aubin, Sieur de Lagrange and provost's lieutenant. De Laubardemont communicated to him the commission of the cardinal and the order of the king, and requested him to arrest Grandier early next morning. M. de Lagrange could not deny the two signatures, and answered that he would obey; but as he foresaw from their manner of going to work that the proceedings about to be instituted would be an assassination and not a fair trial, he sent, in spite of being a distant connection of Memin, whose daughter was married to his (Lagrange's) brother,

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to warn Grandier of the orders he had received. But Grandier with his usual intrepidity, while thanking Lagrange for his generous message, sent back word that, secure in his innocence and relying on the justice of God, he was determined to stand his ground.

So Grandier remained, and his brother, who slept beside him, declared that his sleep that night was as quiet as usual. The next morning he rose, as was his habit, at six o'clock, took his breviary in his hand, and went out with the intention of attending matins at the church of Sainte-Croix. He had hardly put his foot over the threshold before Lagrange, in the presence of Memin, Mignon, and the other conspirators, who had come out to gloat over the sight, arrested him in the name of the king. He was at once placed in the custody of Jean Pouguet, an archer in His Majesty's guards, and of the archers of the provosts of Loudun and Chinon, to be taken to the castle at Angers. Meanwhile a search was instituted, and the royal seal affixed to the doors of his apartments, to his presses, his other articles of furniture—in fact, to every thing and place in the house; but nothing was found that tended to compromise him, except an essay against the celibacy of priests, and two sheets of paper whereon were written in another hand than his, some love-poems in the taste of that time.

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CHAPTER IX

FOR four months Grandier languished in prison, and, according to the report of Michelon, commandant of Angers, and of Pierre Bacher, his confessor, he was, during the whole period, a model of patience and firmness, passing his days in reading good books or in writing prayers and meditations, which were afterwards produced at his trial. Meanwhile, in spite of the urgent appeals of Jeanne Estève, mother of the accused, who, although seventy years of age, seemed to recover her youthful strength and activity in the desire to save her son, Laubardemont continued the examination, which was finished on April 4th. Urbain was then brought back from Angers to Loudun.

An extraordinary cell had been prepared for him in a house belonging to Mignon, and which had formerly been occupied by a sergeant named Bontems, once clerk to Trinquant, who had been a witness for the prosecution in the first trial. It was on the topmost story; the windows had been walled up, leaving only one small slit open, and even this opening was secured by enormous iron bars; and by an

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exaggeration of caution the mouth of the fireplace was furnished with a grating, lest the devils should arrive through the chimney to free the sorcerer from his chains. Furthermore, two holes in the corners of the room, so formed that they were unnoticeable from within, allowed a constant watch to be kept over Grandier's movements by Bontem's wife, a precaution by which they hoped to learn something that would help them in the coming exorcisms. In this room, lying on a little straw, and almost without light, Grandier wrote the following letter to his mother:—

"MY MOTHER,—I received your letter and everything you sent me except the woollen stockings. I endure my affliction with patience, and feel more pity for you than for myself. I am very much inconvenienced for want of a bed; try and have mine brought to me, for my mind will give way if my body has no rest: if you can, send me a breviary, a Bible, and a St. Thomas for my consolation; and above all, do not grieve for me. I trust that God will bring my innocence to light. Commend me to my brother and sister, and all our good friends.—I am, mother, your dutiful son and servant,

"GRANDIER"

While Grandier had been in prison at Angers the

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cases of possession at the convent had miraculously multiplied, for it was no longer only the superior and Sister Claire who had fallen a prey to the evil spirits, but also several other sisters, who were divided into three groups as follows, and separated:—

The superior, with Sisters Louise des Anges and Anne de Sainte-Agnès, were sent to the house of Sieur Delaville, advocate, legal adviser to the sisterhood; Sisters Claire and Catherine de la Présentation were placed in the house of Canon Maurat; Sisters Elisabeth de la Croix, Monique de Sainte-Marthe, Jeanne du Sainte-Esprit, and Séraphique Archer were in a third house.

A general supervision was undertaken by Mem-in's sister, the wife of Moussant, who was thus closely connected with two of the greatest enemies of the accused, and to her Bontems' wife told all that the superior needed to know about Grandier. Such was the manner of the sequestration!

The choice of physicians was no less extraordinary. Instead of calling in the most skilled practitioners of Angers, Tours, Poitiers, or Saumur, all of them, except Daniel Roger of Loudun, came from the surrounding villages, and were men of no education: one of them, indeed, had failed to obtain either degree or licence, and had been obliged to leave Saumur in consequence; another had been

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employed in a small shop to take goods home, a position he had exchanged for the more lucrative one of quack.

There was just as little sense of fairness and propriety shown in the choice of the apothecary and surgeon. The apothecary, whose name was Adam, was Mignon's first cousin, and had been one of the witnesses for the prosecution at Grandier's first trial; and as on that occasion he had libelled a young girl of Loudun, he had been sentenced by a decree of Parliament to make a public apology. And yet, though his hatred of Grandier in consequence of this humiliation was so well known,—perhaps for that very reason,—it was to him the duty of dispensing and administering the prescriptions was entrusted, no one supervising the work even so far as to see that the proper doses were given, or taking note whether for sedatives he did not sometimes substitute stimulating and exciting drugs, capable of producing real convulsions. The surgeon Mannouri was still more unsuitable, for he was a nephew of Memin de Silly, and brother of the nun who had offered the most determined opposition to Grandier's demand for sequestration of the possessed sisters, during the second series of exorcisms. In vain did the mother and brother of the accused present petitions setting forth the incapacity of the doctors and the hatred of Grandier pro-

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fessed by the apothecary; they could not, even at their own expense, obtain certified copies of any of these petitions, although they had witnesses ready to prove that Adam had once in his ignorance dispensed *crocus metallorum* for *crocus martis*—a mistake which had caused the death of the patient for whom the prescription was made up. In short, so determined were the conspirators that this time Grandier should be done to death, that they had not even the decency to conceal the infamous methods by which they had arranged to attain this result.

The examination was carried on with vigour. As one of the first formalities would be the identification of the accused, Grandier published a memorial in which he recalled the case of Saint-Anastasius at the Council of Tyre, who had been accused of immorality by a fallen woman whom he had never seen before. When this woman entered the hall of justice in order to swear to her deposition, a priest named Timothy went up to her and began to talk to her as if he were Anastasius; falling into the trap, she answered as if she recognised him, and thus the innocence of the saint was shown forth. Grandier therefore demanded that two or three persons of his own height and complexion should be dressed exactly like himself, and with him should be allowed to confront the nuns. As he had never seen any of them, and was almost certain they had

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never seen him, they would not be able, he felt sure, to point him out with certainty, in spite of the allegations of undue intimacy with themselves they brought against him. This demand showed such conscious innocence that it was embarrassing to answer, so no notice was taken of it.

Meanwhile the Bishop of Poitiers, who felt much elated at getting the better of the Archbishop of Bordeaux, who of course was powerless against an order issued by the cardinal-duke, took exception to Père l'Escaye and Père Gaut, the exorcists appointed by his superior, and named instead his own chaplain, who had been judge at Grandier's first trial, and had passed sentence on him, and Père Lactance, a Franciscan monk. These two, making no secret of the side with which they sympathised, put up on their arrival at Nicolas Moussant's, one of Grandier's most bitter enemies; on the following day they went to the superior's apartments and began their exorcisms. The first time the superior opened her lips to reply, Père Lactance perceived that she knew almost no Latin, and consequently would not shine during the exorcism, so he ordered her to answer in French, although he still continued to exorcise her in Latin; and when someone was bold enough to object, saying that the devil, according to the ritual, knew all languages living and dead, and ought to reply in the same language in

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which he was addressed, the father declared that the incongruity was caused by the pact, and that moreover some devils were more ignorant than peasants.

Following these exorcists, and two Carmelite monks, named Pierre de Saint-Thomas and Pierre de Saint-Mathurin, who had, from the very beginning, pushed their way in when anything was going on, came four Capuchins sent by Père Joseph, head of the Franciscans, "His grey Eminence," as he was called, and whose names were Pères Luc, Tranquille, Potais, and Elisée; so that a much more rapid advance could be made than hitherto by carrying on the exorcisms in four different places at once—viz., in the convent, and in the churches of Sainte-Croix, Saint-Pierre du Martroy, and Notre-Dame du Château. Very little of importance took place, however, on the first two occasions, the 15th and 16th of April; for the declarations of the doctors were most vague and indefinite, merely saying that the things they had seen were supernatural, surpassing their knowledge and the rules of medicine.

The ceremony of the 23rd April presented, however, some points of interest. The superior, in reply to the interrogations of Père Lactance, stated that the demon had entered her body under the forms of a cat, a dog, a stag, and a buck-goat.

"*Quoties?*" (How often?), inquired the exorcist.

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"I didn't notice the day," replied the superior, mistaking the word *quoties* for *quando* (when).

It was probably to revenge herself for this error that the superior declared the same day that Grandier had on his body five marks made by the devil, and that though his body was else insensible to pain, he was vulnerable at those spots. Mannouri, the surgeon, was therefore ordered to verify this assertion, and the day appointed for the verification was the 26th.

In virtue of this mandate Mannouri presented himself early on that day at Grandier's prison, caused him to be stripped naked and cleanly shaven, then ordered him to be laid on a table and his eyes bandaged. But the devil was wrong again: Grandier had only two marks, instead of five—one on the shoulder-blade, and the other on the thigh.

Then took place one of the most abominable performances that can be imagined. Mannouri held in his hand a probe, with a hollow handle, into which the needle slipped when a spring was touched: when Mannouri applied the probe to those parts of Grandier's body which, according to the superior, were insensible, he touched the spring, and the needle, while seeming to bury itself in the flesh, really retreated into the handle, thus causing no pain; but when he touched one of the marks said to be vulnerable, he left the needle fixed, and drove it in to

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the depth of several inches. The first time he did this it drew from poor Grandier, who was taken unprepared, such a piercing cry that it was heard in the street by the crowd which had gathered round the door. From the mark on the shoulder-blade with which he had commenced, Mannouri passed to that on the thigh, but though he plunged the needle in to its full depth Grandier uttered neither cry nor groan, but went on quietly repeating a prayer, and notwithstanding that Mannouri stabbed him twice more through each of the two marks, he could draw nothing from his victim but prayers for his tormentors.

M. de Laubardemont was present at this scene.

The next day the devil was addressed in such forcible terms that an acknowledgment was wrung from him that Grandier's body bore, not five, but two marks only; and also, to the vast admiration of the spectators, he was able this time to indicate their precise situation.

Unfortunately for the demon, a joke in which he indulged on this occasion detracted from the effect of the above proof of cleverness. Having been asked why he had refused to speak on the preceding Saturday, he said he had not been at Loudun on that day, as the whole morning he had been occupied in accompanying the soul of a certain Le Proust, attorney to the Parliament of Paris, to

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hell. This answer awoke such doubts in the breasts of some of the laymen present that they took the trouble to examine the register of deaths, and found that no one of the name of Le Proust, belonging to any profession whatever, had died on that date. This discovery rendered the devil less terrible, and perhaps less amusing.

Meantime the progress of the other exorcisms met with like interruptions. Père Pierre de Saint-Thomas, who conducted the operations in the Carmelite church, asked one of the possessed sisters where Grandier's books of magic were; she replied that they were kept at the house of a certain young girl, whose name she gave, and who was the same to whom Adam had been forced to apologise. De Laubardemont, Moussant, Hervé, and Meunau hastened at once to the house indicated, searched the rooms and the presses, opened the chests and the wardrobes and all the secret places in the house, but in vain. On their return to the church, they reproached the devil for having deceived them, but he explained that a niece of the young woman had removed the books. Upon this, they hurried to the niece's dwelling, but unluckily she was not at home, having spent the whole day at a certain church making her devotions, and when they went thither, the priests and attendants averred that she had not gone out all day; so notwithstanding the desire of the

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exorcists to oblige Adam they were forced to let the matter drop.

These two false statements increased the number of unbelievers; but it was announced that a most interesting performance would take place on May 4th; indeed, the programme when issued was varied enough to arouse general curiosity. Asmodeus was to raise the superior two feet from the ground, and the fiends Eazas and Cerberus, in emulation of their leader, would do as much for two other nuns; while a fourth devil, named Béhérit, would go farther still, and, greatly daring, would attack M. de Laubardemont himself, and, having spirited his councillor's cap from his head, would hold it suspended in the air for the space of a *Miserere*. Furthermore, the exorcists announced that six of the strongest men in the town would try to prevent the contortions of the weakest of the convulsed nuns, and would fail.

It need hardly be said that the prospect of such an entertainment filled the church on the appointed day to overflowing. Père Lactance began by calling on Asmodeus to fulfil his promise of raising the superior from the ground. She began, hereupon, to perform various evolutions on her mattress, and at one moment it seemed as if she were really suspended in the air; but one of the spectators lifted her dress and showed that she was only standing on tiptoe, which, though it might be clever, was not

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miraculous. Shouts of laughter rent the air, which had such an intimidating effect on Eazas and Cerberus that not all the adjurations of the exorcists could extract the slightest response. Béhérit was their last hope, and he replied that he was prepared to lift up M. de Laubardemont's cap, and would do so before the expiration of a quarter of an hour.

We must here remark that this time the exorcisms took place in the evening, instead of in the morning as hitherto; and it was now growing dark, and darkness is favourable to illusions. Several of the unbelieving ones present, therefore, began to call attention to the fact that the quarter of an hour's delay would necessitate the employment of artificial light during the next scene. They also noticed that M. de Laubardemont had seated himself apart and immediately beneath one of the arches in the vaulted roof, through which a hole had been drilled for the passage of the bell-rope. They therefore slipped out of the church, and up into the belfry, where they hid. In a few moments a man appeared who began to work at something. They sprang on him and seized his wrists, and found in one of his hands a thin line of horsehair, to one end of which a hook was attached. The holder being frightened, dropped the line and fled, and although M. de Laubardemont, the exorcists, and the spectators waited, expecting every moment

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that the cap would rise into the air, it remained quite firm on the owner's head, to the no small confusion of Père Lactance, who, all unwitting of the fiasco, continued to adjure Béhérit to keep his word—of course without the least effect.

Altogether, this performance of May 4th, went anything but smoothly. Till now no trick had succeeded; never before had the demons been such bunglers. But the exorcists were sure that the last trick would go off without a hitch. This was, that a nun, held by six men chosen for their strength, would succeed in extricating herself from their grasp, despite their utmost efforts. Two Carmelites and two Capuchins went through the audience and selected six giants from among the porters and messengers of the town.

This time the devil answered expectations by showing that if he was not clever he was strong, for although the six men tried to hold her down upon her mattress, the superior was seized with such terrible convulsions that she escaped from their hands, throwing down one of those who tried to detain her. This experiment, thrice renewed, succeeded thrice, and belief seemed about to return to the assembly, when a physician of Saumur named Duncan, suspecting trickery, entered the choir, and, ordering the six men to retire, said he was going to try and hold the superior down unaided, and if she escaped

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from his hands he would make a public apology for his unbelief. M. de Laubardemont tried to prevent this test, by objecting to Duncan as an atheist, but as Duncan was greatly respected on account of his skill and probity, there was such an outcry at this interference from the entire audience that the commissioner was forced to let him have his way. The six porters were therefore dismissed, but instead of resuming their places among the spectators they left the church by the sacristy, while Duncan approaching the bed on which the superior had again lain down, seized her by the wrist, and making certain that he had a firm hold, he told the exorcists to begin.

Never up to that time had it been so clearly shown that the conflict going on was between public opinion and the private aims of a few. A hush fell on the church; everyone stood motionless in silent expectancy.

The moment Père Lactance uttered the sacred words the convulsions of the superior recommenced; but it seemed as if Duncan had more strength than his six predecessors together, for twist and writhe and struggle as she would, the superior's wrist remained none the less firmly clasped in Duncan's hand. At length she fell back on her bed exhausted, exclaiming—

"It's no use, it's no use! He's holding me!"

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"Release her arm!" shouted Père Lactance in a rage. "How can the convulsions take place if you hold her that way?"

"If she is really possessed by a demon," answered Duncan aloud, "he should be stronger than I; for it is stated in the ritual that among the symptoms of possession is strength beyond one's years, beyond one's condition, and beyond what is natural."

"That is badly argued," said Lactance sharply: "a demon outside the body is indeed stronger than you, but when enclosed in a weak frame such as this it cannot show such strength, for its efforts are proportioned to the strength of the body it possesses."

"Enough!" said M. de Laubardemont; "we did not come here to argue with philosophers, but to build up the faith of Christians."

With that he rose up from his chair amidst a terrible uproar, and the assembly dispersed in the utmost disorder, as if they were leaving a theatre rather than a church.

The ill success of this exhibition caused a cessation of events of interest for some days. The result was that a great number of noblemen and other people of quality who had come to Loudun expecting to see wonders and had been shown only commonplace transparent tricks, began to think it was not worth while remaining any longer, and went

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their several ways—a defection much bewailed by Père Tranquille in a little work which he published on this affair.

"Many," he says, "came to see miracles at Loudun, but finding the devils did not give them the signs they expected, they went away dissatisfied, and swelled the numbers of the unbelieving."

It was determined, therefore, in order to keep the town full, to predict some great event which would revive curiosity and increase faith. Père Lactance therefore announced that on the 20th of May three of the seven devils dwelling in the superior would come out, leaving three wounds in her left side, with corresponding holes in her chemise, bodice, and dress. The three parting devils were Asmodeus, Grésil des Trônes, and Aman des Puissances. He added that the superior's hands would be bound behind her back at the time the wounds were given.

On the appointed day the church of Sainte-Croix was filled to overflowing with sightseers curious to know if the devils would keep their promises better this time than the last. Physicians were invited to examine the superior's side and her clothes; and amongst those who came forward was Duncan, whose presence guaranteed the public against deception; but none of the exorcists ventured to exclude him, despite the hatred in which they held

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him—a hatred which they would have made him feel if he had not been under the special protection of Marshal Brezé. The physicians having completed their examination, gave the following certificate:—

"We have found no wound in the patient's side, no rent in her vestments, and our search revealed no sharp instrument hidden in the folds of her dress."

These preliminaries having been got through, Père Lactance questioned her in French for nearly two hours, her answers being in the same language. Then he passed from questions to adjurations: on this, Duncan came forward, and said a promise had been given that the superior's hands should be tied behind her back, in order that there might be no room for suspicion of fraud, and that the moment had now arrived to keep that promise. Père Lactance admitted the justice of the demand, but said as there were many present who had never seen the superior in convulsions such as afflicted the possessed, it would be only fair that she should be exorcised for their satisfaction before binding her. Accordingly he began to repeat the form of exorcism, and the superior was immediately attacked by frightful convulsions, which in a few minutes produced complete exhaustion, so that she fell on her face to the ground, and turning on her left arm and

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side, remained motionless some instants, after which she uttered a low cry, followed by a groan. The physicians approached her, and Duncan seeing her take away her hand from her left side, seized her arm, and found that the tips of her fingers were stained with blood. They then examined her clothing and body, and found her dress, bodice, and chemise cut through in three places, the cuts being less than an inch long. There were also three scratches beneath the left breast, so slight as to be scarcely more than skin deep, the middle one being a barleycorn in length; still, from all three a sufficient quantity of blood had oozed to stain the chemise above them.

This time the fraud was so glaring that even de Laubardemont exhibited some signs of confusion because of the number and quality of the spectators. He would not, however, allow the doctors to include in their report their opinion as to the manner in which the wounds were inflicted; but Grandier protested against this in a *Statement of Facts*, which he drew up during the night, and which was distributed next day.

It was as follows:—

"That if the superior had not groaned the physicians would not have removed her clothes, and would have suffered her to be bound, without having

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the least idea that the wounds were already made; that then the exorcists would have commanded the devils to come forth, leaving the traces they had promised; that the superior would then have gone through the most extraordinary contortions of which she was capable, and have had a long fit of convulsions, at the end of which she would have been delivered from the three demons, and the wounds would have been found in her body; that her groans, which had betrayed her, had by God's will thwarted the best-laid plans of men and devils. "Why do you suppose," he went on to ask, "that clean incised wounds, such as a sharp blade would make, were chosen for a token, seeing that the wounds left by devils resemble burns? Was it not because it was easier for the superior to conceal a lancet with which to wound herself slightly, than to conceal any instrument sufficiently heated to burn her? Why do you think the left side was chosen rather than the forehead and nose, if not because she could not give herself a wound in either of those places without being seen by all the spectators? Why was the left side rather than the right chosen, if it were not that it was easier for the superior to wound herself with her right hand, which she habitually used, in the left side than in the right? Why did she turn on her left side and arm and remain so long in that position, if it were

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not to hide from the bystanders the instrument with which she wounded herself? What do you think caused her to groan, in spite of all her resolution, if it were not the pain of the wound she gave herself? for the most courageous cannot repress a shudder when the surgeon opens a vein. Why were her finger-tips stained with blood, if it were not that the secreted blade was so small that the fingers which held it could not escape being reddened by the blood it caused to flow? How came it that the wounds were so superficial that they barely went deeper than the cuticle, while devils are known to rend and tear demoniacs when leaving them, if it were not that the superior did not hate herself enough to inflict deep and dangerous wounds?"

Despite this logical protest from Grandier and the barefaced knavery of the exorcists, M. de Laubardemont prepared a report of the expulsion of the three devils, Asmodeus, Grésil, and Aman, from the body of sister Jeanne des Anges, through three wounds below the region of the heart; a report which was afterwards shamelessly used against Grandier, and of which the memorandum still exists, a monument, not so much of credulity and superstition, as of hatred and revenge. Père Lactance, in order to allay the suspicions which the pretended miracle had aroused among the eye-wit-

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nesses, asked Balaam, one of the four demons who still remained in the superior's body, the following day, why Asmodeus and his two companions had gone out against their promise, while the superior's face and hands were hidden from the people.

"To lengthen the incredulity of certain people," answered Balaam.

As for Père Tranquille, he published a little volume describing the whole affair, in which, with the irresponsible frivolity of a true Capuchin, he poked fun at those who could not swallow the miracles wholesale.

"They had every reason to feel vexed," he said, "at the small courtesy or civility shown by the demons to persons of their merit and station; but if they had examined their consciences, perhaps they would have found the real reason of their discontent, and, turning their anger against themselves, would have done penance for having come to the exorcisms led by a depraved moral sense and a prying spirit."

Nothing remarkable happened from the 20th May till the 13th June, a day which became noteworthy by reason of the superior's vomiting a quill a finger long. It was doubtless this last miracle which brought the Bishop of Poitiers to Loudun, "not," as he said to those who came to pay their respects to him, "to examine into the genuineness of the

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possession, but to force those to believe who still doubted, and to discover the classes which Urbain had founded to teach the black art to pupils of both sexes."

Thereupon the opinion began to prevail among the people that it would be prudent to believe in the possession, since the king, the cardinal-duke, and the bishop believed in it, and that continued doubt would lay them open to the charges of disloyalty to their king and their Church, and of complicity in the crimes of Grandier, and thus draw down upon them the ruthless punishment of Laubardemont.

"The reason we feel so certain that our work is pleasing to God is that it is also pleasing to the king," wrote Père Lactance.

The arrival of the bishop was followed by a new exorcism; and of this an eye-witness, who was a good Catholic and a firm believer in possession, has left us a written description, more interesting than any we could give. We shall present it to our readers, word for word, as it stands:—

"On Friday, 23rd June 1634, on the Eve of Saint John, about 3 p.m., the Lord Bishop of Poitiers and M. de Laubardemont being present in the church of Sainte-Croix of Loudun, to continue the exorcisms of the Ursuline nuns, by order of M. de Laubardemont, commissioner, Urbain Grandier, priest-

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in-charge, accused and denounced as a magician by the said possessed nuns, was brought from his prison to the said church.

"There were produced by the said commissioner to the said Urbain Grandier four pacts mentioned several times by the said possessed nuns at the preceding exorcisms, which the devils who possessed the nuns declared they had made with the said Grandier on several occasions: there was one in especial which Leviathan gave up on Saturday the 17th inst., composed of an infant's heart procured at a witches' sabbath, held in Orleans in 1631; the ashes of a consecrated wafer, blood, etc., of the said Grandier, whereby Leviathan asserted he had entered the body of the sister, Jeanne des Anges, the superior of the said nuns, and took possession of her with his coadjutors Béhérit, Eazas, and Balaam, on December 8th, 1632. Another such pact was composed of the pips of Grenada oranges, and was given up by Asmodeus and a number of other devils. It had been made to hinder Béhérit from keeping his promise to lift the commissioner's hat two inches from his head and to hold it there the length of a *Miserere,* as a sign that he had come out of the nun. On all these pacts being shown to the said Grandier, he said, without astonishment, but with much firmness and resolution, that he had no knowledge of them whatever, that he had never made

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them, and had not the skill by which to make them, that he had held no communication with devils, and knew nothing of what they were talking about. A report of all this being made and shown to him, he signed it.

"This done, they brought all the possessed nuns, to the number of eleven or twelve, including three lay sisters, also possessed, into the choir of the said church, accompanied by a great many monks, Carmelites, Capuchins, and Franciscans; and by three physicians and a surgeon. The sisters on entering made some wanton remarks, calling Grandier their master, and exhibiting great delight at seeing him.

"Thereupon Père Lactance and Gabriel, a Franciscan brother, and one of the exorcists, exhorted all present with great fervour to lift up their hearts to God and to make an act of contrition for the offences committed against His divine majesty, and to pray that the number of their sins might not be an obstacle to the fulfilment of the plans which He in His providence had formed for the promotion of His glory on that occasion, and to give outward proof of their heartfelt grief by repeating the *Confiteor* as a preparation for the blessing of the Lord Bishop of Poitiers. This having been done, he went on to say that the matter in question was of such moment and so important in its relation to the great truths of the Roman Catholic Church, that this con-

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sideration alone ought to be sufficient to excite their devotion; and furthermore, that the affliction of these poor sisters was so peculiar and had lasted so long, that charity impelled all those who had the right to work for their deliverance and the expulsion of the devils, to employ the power entrusted to them with their office in accomplishing so worthy a task by the forms of exorcism prescribed by the Church to its ministers; then addressing Grandier, he said that he having been anointed as a priest belonged to this number, and that he ought to help with all his power and with all his energy, if the bishop were pleased to allow him to do so, and to remit his suspension from authority. The bishop having granted permission, the Franciscan friar offered a stole to Grandier, who, turning towards the prelate, asked him if he might take it. On receiving a reply in the affirmative, he passed it round his neck, and on being offered a copy of the ritual, he asked permission to accept it as before, and received the bishop's blessing, prostrating himself at his feet to kiss them; whereupon the *Veni Creator Spiritus* having been sung, he rose, and addressing the bishop, asked—

"'My lord, whom am I to exorcise?'

"The said bishop having replied—

"'These maidens.'

"Grandier again asked—

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"'What maidens?'

"'The possessed maidens,' was the answer.

"'That is to say, my lord,' said he, "that I am obliged to believe in the fact of possession. The Church believes in it, therefore I too believe; but I cannot believe that a sorcerer can cause a Christian to be possessed unless the Christian consent.'

"Upon this, some of those present exclaimed that it was heretical to profess such a belief; that the contrary was indubitable, believed by the whole Church and approved by the Sorbonne. To which he replied that his mind on that point was not yet irrevocably made up, that what he had said was simply his own idea, and that in any case he submitted to the opinion of the whole body of which he was only a member; that nobody was declared a heretic for having doubts, but only for persisting in them, and that what he had advanced was only for the purpose of drawing an assurance from the bishop that in doing what he was about to do he would not be abusing the authority of the Church. Sister Catherine having been brought to him by the Franciscan as the most ignorant of all the nuns, and the least open to the suspicion of being acquainted with Latin, he began the exorcism in the form prescribed by the ritual. But as soon as he began to question her he was interrupted, for all the other nuns were attacked by devils, and uttered strange and terrible

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noises. Amongst the rest, Sister Claire came near, and reproached him for his blindness and obstinacy, so that he was forced to leave the nun with whom he had begun, and address his words to the said Sister Claire, who during the entire duration of the exorcism continued to talk at random, without paying any heed to Grandier's words, which were also interrupted by the mother superior, to whom he at last gave attention, leaving Sister Claire. But it is to be noted that before beginning to exorcise the superior, he said, speaking in Latin as hertofore, that knowing she understood Latin, he would question her in Greek. To which the devil replied by the mouth of the possessed—

"'Ah! how clever you are! You know it was one of the first conditions of our pact that I was not to answer in Greek.'

"Upon this, he cried, '*O pulchra illusio, egregia evasio!*' (O superb fraud, outrageous evasion!)

"He was then told that he was permitted to exorcise in Greek, provided he first wrote down what he wished to say, and the superior hereupon said that he should be answered in what language he pleased; but it was impossible, for as soon as he opened his mouth all the nuns recommenced their shrieks and paroxysms, showing unexampled despair, and giving way to convulsions, which in each patient assumed a new form, and persisting in

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accusing Grandier of using magic and the black art to torment them; offering to wring his neck if they were allowed, and trying to outrage his feelings in every possible way. But this being against the prohibitions of the Church, the priests and monks present worked with the utmost zeal to calm the frenzy which had seized on the nuns. Grandier meanwhile remained calm and unmoved, gazing fixedly at the maniacs, protesting his innocence, and praying to God for protection. Then addressing himself to the bishop and M. de Laubardemont, he implored them by the ecclesiastical and royal authority of which they were the ministers to command these demons to wring his neck, or at least to put a mark in his forehead, if he were guilty of the crime of which they accused him, that the glory of God might be shown forth, the authority of the Church vindicated, and himself brought to confusion, provided that the nuns did not touch him with their hands. But to this the bishop and the commissioner would not consent, because they did not want to be responsible for what might happen to him, neither would they expose the authority of the Church to the wiles of the devils, who might have made some pact on that point with Grandier. Then the exorcists, to the number of eight, having commanded the devils to be silent and to cease their tumult, ordered a brazier to be brought, and into

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this they threw the pacts one by one, whereupon the convulsions returned with such awful violence and confused cries, rising into frenzied shrieks, and accompanied by such horrible contortions, that the scene might have been taken for an orgy of witches, were it not for the sanctity of the place and the character of those present, of whom Grandier, in outward seeming at least, was the least amazed of any, although he had the most reason. The devils continued their accusations, citing the places, the days, and the hours of their intercourse with him; the first spell he cast on them, his scandalous behaviour, his insensibility, his abjurations of God and the faith. To all this he calmly returned that these accusations were calumnies, and all the more unjust considering his profession; that he renounced Satan and all his fiends, having neither knowledge nor comprehension of them; that in spite of all he was a Christian, and what was more, an anointed priest; that though he knew himself to be a sinful man, yet his trust was in God and in His Christ; that he had never indulged in such abominations, and that it would be impossible to furnish any pertinent and convincing proof of his guilt.

"At this point no words could express what the senses perceived; eyes and ears received an impression of being surrounded by furies such as had never been gathered together before; and unless

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accustomed to such ghastly scenes as those who sacrifice to demons, no one could keep his mind free from astonishment and horror in the midst of such a spectacle. Grandier alone remained unchanged through it all, seemingly insensible to the monstrous exhibitions, singing hymns to the Lord with the rest of the people, as confident as if he were guarded by legions of angels. One of the demons cried out that Beelzebub was standing between him and Père Tranquille the Capuchin, upon which Grandier said to the demon—

"'*Obmutescas!*' (Hold thy peace).

"Upon this the demon began to curse, and said that was their watchword; but they could not hold their peace, because God was infinitely powerful, and the powers of hell could not prevail against Him. Thereupon they all struggled to get at Grandier, threatening to tear him limb from limb, to point out his marks, to strangle him although he was their master; whereupon he seized a chance to say he was neither their master nor their servant, and that it was incredible that they should in the same breath acknowledge him for their master and express a desire to strangle him: on hearing this, the frenzy of the nuns reached its height, and they kicked their slippers into his face.

"'Just look!' said he; 'the shoes drop from the hoofs of their own accord.'

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"At length, had it not been for the help and interposition of people in the choir, the nuns in their frenzy would have taken the life of the chief personage in this spectacle; so there was no choice but to take him away from the church and the furies who threatened his life. He was therefore brought back to prison about six o'clock in the evening, and the rest of the day the exorcists were employed in calming the poor sisters—a task of no small difficulty."

Everyone did not regard the possessed sisters with the indulgent eye of the author of the above narrative, and many saw in this terrible exhibition of hysteria and convulsions an infamous and sacrilegious orgy, at which revenge ran riot. There was such difference of opinion about it that it was considered necessary to publish the following proclamation by means of placards on July 2nd:—

"All persons, of whatever rank or profession, are hereby expressly forbidden to traduce, or in any way malign, the nuns and other persons at Loudun possessed by evil spirits; or their exorcists; or those who accompany them either to the places appointed for exorcism or elsewhere; in any form or manner whatever, on pain of a fine of ten thousand livres, or a larger sum and corporal punishment should the case so require; and in order that no one may

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plead ignorance hereof, this proclamation will be read and published to-day from the pulpits of all the churches, and copies affixed to the church doors and in other suitable public places.

"Done at Loudun, July 2nd, 1634."

This order had great influence with worldly folk, and from that moment, whether their belief was strengthened or not, they no longer dared to express any incredulity. But in spite of that, the judges were put to shame, for the nuns themselves began to repent; and on the day following the impious scene above described, just as Père Lactance began to exorcise Sister Claire in the castle chapel, she rose, and turning towards the congregation, while tears ran down her cheeks, said in a voice that could be heard by all present, that she was going to speak the truth at last in the sight of Heaven. Thereupon she confessed that all that she had said during the last fortnight against Grandier was calumnious and false, and that all her actions had been done at the instigation of the Franciscan Père Lactance, the director Mignon, and the Carmelite brothers. Père Lactance, not in the least taken aback, declared that her confession was a fresh wile of the devil to save her master Grandier. She then made an urgent appeal to the bishop and to M. de Laubardemont, asking to be sequestered and placed in charge of

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other priests than those who had destroyed her soul, by making her bear false witness against an innocent man; but they only laughed at the pranks the devil was playing, and ordered her to be at once taken back to the house in which she was then living. When she heard this order, she darted out of the choir, trying to escape through the church door, imploring those present to come to her assistance and save her from everlasting damnation. But such terrible fruit had the proclamation borne that no one dared respond, so she was recaptured and taken back to the house in which she was sequestered, never to leave it again.

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CHAPTER X

THE next day a still more extraordinary scene took place. While M. de Laubardemont was questioning one of the nuns, the superior came down into the court, barefooted, in her chemise, and a cord round her neck; and there she remained for two hours, in the midst of a fearful storm, not shrinking before lightning, thunder, or rain, but waiting till M. de Laubardemont and the other exorcists should come out. At length the door opened and the royal commissioner appeared, whereupon Sister Jeanne des Anges, throwing herself at his feet, declared she had not sufficient strength to play the horrible part they had made her learn any longer, and that before God and man she declared Urbain Grandier innocent, saying that all the hatred which she and her companions had felt against him arose from the baffled desires which his comeliness awoke—desires which the seclusion of conventional life made still more ardent. M. de Laubardemont threatened her with the full weight of his displeasure, but she answered, weeping bitterly, that all she now dreaded was her sin, for though the mercy of

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the Saviour was great, she felt that the crime she had committed could never be pardoned. M. de Laubardemont exclaimed that it was the demon who dwelt in her who was speaking, but she replied that the only demon by whom she had even been possessed was the spirit of vengeance, and that it was indulgence in her own evil thoughts, and not a pact with the devil, which had admitted him into her heart.

With these words she withdrew slowly, still weeping, and going into the garden, attached one end of the cord round her neck to the branch of a tree, and hanged herself. But some of the sisters who had followed her cut her down before life was extinct.

The same day an order for her strict seclusion was issued for her as for Sister Claire, and the circumstances that she was a relation of M. de Laubardemont did not avail to lessen her punishment in view of the gravity of her fault.

It was impossible to continue the exorcisms: other nuns might be tempted to follow the example of the superior and Sister Claire, and in that case all would be lost. And besides, was not Urbain Grandier well and duly convicted? It was announced, therefore, that the examination had proceeded far enough, and that the judges would consider the evidence and deliver judgment.

This long succession of violent and irregular

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breaches of law procedure, the repeated denials of his claim to justice, the refusal to let his witnesses appear, or to listen to his defence, all combined to convince Grandier that his ruin was determined on; for the case had gone so far and had attained such publicity that it was necessary either to punish him as a sorcerer and magician or to render a royal commissioner, a bishop, an entire community of nuns, several monks of various orders, many judges of high reputation, and laymen of birth and standing, liable to the penalties incurred by calumniators. But although, as this conviction grew, he confronted it with resignation, his courage did not fail, and holding it to be his duty as a man and a Christian to defend his life and honour to the end, he drew up and published another memorandum, headed *Reasons for Acquittal,* and had copies laid before his judges. It was a weighty and impartial summing up of the whole case, such as a stranger might have written, and began with these words:—

"I entreat you in all humility to consider deliberately and with attention what the Psalmist says in Psalm 82, where he exhorts judges to fulfil their charge with absolute rectitude; they being themselves mere mortals who will one day have to appear before God, the sovereign Judge of the universe, to give an account of their administration.

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The Lord's Anointed speaks to you to-day who are sitting in judgment, and says—

"'God standeth in the congregation of the mighty: He judgeth among the gods.

"'How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked?

"'Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.

"'Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.

. . . . . .

"'I have said, Ye are gods: and all of you are children of the Most High.

"'But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.'"

But this appeal, although convincing and dignified, had no influence upon the commission; and on the 18th of August the following verdict and sentence was pronounced:—

"We have declared, and do hereby declare, Urbain Grandier duly accused and convicted of the crimes of magic and witchcraft, and of causing the persons of certain Ursuline nuns of this town and of other females to become possessed of evil spirits, wherefrom other crimes and offences have resulted.

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By way of reparation therefor, we have sentenced, and do hereby sentence, the said Grandier to make public apology, bareheaded, with a cord around his neck, holding a lighted torch of two pounds weight in his hand, before the west door of the church of Saint-Pierre in the Market Place and before that of Sainte-Ursule, both of this town, and there on bended knee to ask pardon of God and the king and the law, and this done, to be taken to the public square of Sainte-Croix and there to be attached to a stake, set in the midst of a pile of wood, both of which to be prepared there for this purpose, and to be burnt alive, along with the pacts and spells which remain in the hands of the clerk and the manuscript of the book written by the said Grandier against a celibate priesthood, and his ashes to be scattered to the four winds of heaven. And we have declared, and do hereby declare, all and every part of his property confiscate to the king, the sum of one hundred and fifty livres being first taken therefrom to be employed in the purchase of a copper plate whereon the substance of the present decree shall be engraved, the same to be exposed in a conspicuous place in the said church of Sainte-Ursule, there to remain in perpetuity; and before this sentence is carried out, we order the said Grandier to be put to the question ordinary and extraordinary, so that his accomplices may become known.

1372

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"Pronounced at Loudun against the said Grandier this 18th day of August 1634."

On the morning of the day on which this sentence was passed, M. de Laubardemont ordered the surgeon François Fourneau to be arrested at his own house and taken to Grandier's cell, although he was ready to go there of his own free will. In passing through the adjoining room he heard the voice of the accused saying—

"What do you want with me, wretched executioner? Have you come to kill me? You know how cruelly you have already tortured my body. Well, I am ready to die."

On entering the room, Fourneau saw that these words had been addressed to the surgeon Mannouri.

One of the officers of the *grand prévôt de l'hôtel,* to whom M. de Laubardemont lent for the occasion the title of officer of the king's guard, ordered the new arrival to shave Grandier, and not leave a single hair on his whole body. This was a formality employed in cases of witchcraft, so that the devil should have no place to hide in; for it was the common belief that if a single hair were left, the devil could render the accused insensible to the pains of torture. From this Urbain understood that the verdict had gone against him and that he was condemned to death.

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Fourneau having saluted Grandier, proceeded to carry out his orders, whereupon a judge said it was not sufficient to shave the body of the prisoner, but that his nails must also be torn out, lest the devil should hide beneath them. Grandier looked at the speaker with an expression of unutterable pity, and held out his hands to Fourneau; but Forneau put them gently aside, and said he would do nothing of the kind, even were the order given by the cardinal-duke himself, and at the same time begged Grandier's pardon for shaving him. At these words Grandier, who had for so long met with nothing but barbarous treatment from those with whom he came in contact, turned towards the surgeon with tears in his eyes, saying—

"So you are the only one who has any pity for me."

"Ah, sir," replied Fourneau, "you don't see everybody."

Grandier was then shaved, but only two marks found on him, one as we have said on the shoulder-blade, and the other on the thigh. Both marks were very sensitive, the wounds which Mannouri had made not having yet healed. This point having been certified by Fourneau, Grandier was handed, not his own clothes, but some wretched garments which had probably belonged to some other condemned man.

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Then, although his sentence had been pronounced at the Carmelite convent, he was taken by the grand provost's officer, with two of his archers, accompanied by the provosts of Loudun and Chinon, to the town hall, where several ladies of quality, among them Madame de Laubardemont, led by curiosity, were sitting beside the judges, waiting to hear the sentence read. M. de Laubardemont was in the seat usually occupied by the clerk, and the clerk was standing before him. All the approaches were lined with soldiers.

Before the accused was brought in, Père Lactance and another Franciscan who had come with him exorcised him to oblige the devils to leave him; then entering the judgment hall, they exorcised the earth, the air, "and the other elements." Not till that was done was Grandier led in.

At first he was kept at the far end of the hall, to allow time for the exorcisms to have their full effect, then he was brought forward to the bar and ordered to kneel down. Grandier obeyed, but could remove neither his hat nor his skull-cap, as his hands were bound behind his back, whereupon the clerk seized on the one and the provost's officer on the other, and flung them at de Laubardemont's feet. Seeing that the accused fixed his eyes on the commissioner as if waiting to see what he was about to do, the clerk said—

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"Turn your head, unhappy man, and adore the crucifix above the bench."

Grandier obeyed without a murmur and with great humility, and remained sunk in silent prayer for about ten minutes; he then resumed his former attitude.

The clerk then began to read the sentence in a trembling voice, while Grandier listened with unshaken firmness and wonderful tranquillity, although it was the most terrible sentence that could be passed, condemning the accused to be burnt alive the same day, after the infliction of ordinary and extraordinary torture. When the clerk had ended, Grandier said, with a voice unmoved from its usual calm—

"Messeigneurs, I aver in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and the Blessed Virgin, my only hope, that I have never been a magician, that I have never committed sacrilege, that I know no other magic than that of the Holy Scriptures, which I have always preached, and that I have never held any other belief than that of our Holy Mother the Catholic Apostolic Church of Rome; I renounce the devil and all his works; I confess my Redeemer, and I pray to be saved through the blood of the Cross; and I beseech you, messeigneurs, to mitigate the rigour of my sentence, and not to drive my soul to despair."

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The concluding words led de Laubardemont to believe that he could obtain some admission from Grandier through fear of suffering, so he ordered the court to be cleared, and, being left alone with Maître Houmain, criminal lieutenant of Orleans, and the Franciscans, he addressed Grandier in a stern voice, saying there was only one way to obtain any mitigation of his sentence, and that was to confess the names of his accomplices and to sign the confession. Grandier replied that having committed no crime he could have no accomplices, whereupon Laubardemont ordered the prisoner to be taken to the torture chamber, which adjoined the judgment hall —an order which was instantly obeyed.

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CHAPTER XI

THE mode of torture employed at Loudun was a variety of the boot, and one of the most painful of all. Each of the victim's legs below the knee was placed between two boards, the two pairs were then laid one above the other and bound together firmly at the ends; wedges were then driven in with a mallet between the two middle boards; four such wedges constituted ordinary and eight extraordinary torture; and this latter was seldom inflicted, except on those condemned to death, as almost no one ever survived it, the sufferer's legs being crushed to a pulp before he left the torturer's hands. In this case M. de Laubardemont on his own initiative, for it had never been done before, added two wedges to those of the extraordinary torture, so that instead of eight, ten were to be driven in.

Nor was this all: the commissioner royal and the two Franciscans undertook to inflict the torture themselves.

Laubardemont ordered Grandier to be bound in the usual manner, and then saw his legs placed be-

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tween the boards. He then dismissed the executioner and his assistants, and directed the keeper of the instruments to bring the wedges, which he complained of as being too small. Unluckily, there were no larger ones in stock, and in spite of threats the keeper persisted in saying he did not know where to procure others. M. de Laubardemont then asked how long it would take to make some, and was told two hours; finding that too long to wait, he was obliged to put up with those he had.

Thereupon the torture began. Père Lactance having exorcised the instruments, drove in the first wedge, but could not draw a murmur from Grandier, who was reciting a prayer in a low voice; a second was driven home, and this time the victim, despite his resolution, could not avoid interrupting his devotions by two groans, at each of which Père Lactance struck harder, crying, "*Dicas! dicas!*" (Confess, confess!), a word which he repeated so often and so furiously, till all was over, that he was ever after popularly called "Père Dicas."

When the second wedge was in, de Laubardemont showed Grandier his manuscript against the celibacy of the priests, and asked if he acknowledged it to be in his own handwriting. Grandier answered in the affirmative. Asked what motive he had in writing it, he said it was an attempt to restore peace of mind to a poor girl whom he had

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loved, as was proved by the two lines written at the end—

"Si ton gentil esprit prend bien cette science,
Tu mettras en repos ta bonne conscience."[1]

Upon this, M. de Laubardemont demanded the girl's name; but Grandier assured him it should never pass his lips, none knowing it but himself and God. Thereupon M. de Laubardemont ordered Père Lactance to insert the third wedge. While it was being driven in by the monk's lusty arm, each blow being accompanied by the word "*Dicas!*" Grandier exclaimed—

"My God! they are killing me, and yet I am neither a sorcerer nor sacrilegious!"

At the fourth wedge Grandier fainted, muttering—

"Oh, Père Lactance, is this charity?"

Although his victim was unconscious, Père Lactance continued to strike; so that, having lost consciousness through pain, pain soon brought him back to life.

De Laubardemont took advantage of this revival to take his turn at demanding a confession of his crimes; but Grandier said—

"I have committed no crimes, sir, only errors. Being a man, I have often gone astray; but I have

[1] "If thy sensitive mind imbibe this teaching,
It will give ease to thy tender conscience."

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confessed and done penance, and believe that my prayers for pardon have been heard; but if not, I trust that God will grant me pardon now, for the sake of my sufferings."

At the fifth wedge Grandier fainted once more, but they restored him to consciousness by dashing cold water in his face, whereupon he moaned, turning to M. de Laubardemont—

"In pity, sir, put me to death at once! I am only a man, and I cannot answer for myself that if you continue to torture me so I shall not give way to despair."

"Then sign this, and the torture shall cease," answered the commissioner royal, offering him a paper.

"My father," said Urbain, turning towards the Franciscan, "can you assure me on your conscience that it is permissible for a man, in order to escape suffering, to confess a crime he has never committed?"

"No," replied the monk; "for if he die with a lie on his lips he dies in mortal sin."

"Go on, then," said Grandier; "for having suffered so much in my body, I desire to save my soul."

As Père Lactance drove in the sixth wedge Grandier fainted anew.

When he had been revived, Laubardemont called upon him to confess that a certain Elisabeth Blanchard had been his mistress, as well as the girl for

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whom he had written the treatise against celibacy; but Grandier replied that not only had no improper relations ever existed between them, but that the day he had been confronted with her at his trial was the first time he had ever seen her.

At the seventh wedge Grandier's legs burst open, and the blood spurted into Père Lactance's face; but he wiped it away with the sleeve of his gown.

"O Lord my God, have mercy on me! I die!" cried Grandier, and fainted for the fourth time. Père Lactance seized the opportunity to take a short rest, and sat down.

When Grandier had once more come to himself, he began slowly to utter a prayer, so beautiful and so moving that the provost's lieutenant wrote it down; but de Laubardemont noticing this, forbade him ever to show it to anyone.

At the eighth wedge the bones gave way, and the marrow oozed out of the wounds, and it became useless to drive in any more wedges, the legs being now as flat as the boards that compressed them, and moreover Père Lactance was quite worn out.

Grandier was unbound and laid upon the flagged floor, and while his eyes shone with fever and agony he prayed again a second prayer—a veritable martyr's prayer, overflowing with faith and enthusiasm; but as he ended his strength failed, and he again became unconscious. The provost's lieuten-

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ant forced a little wine between his lips, which brought him to; then he made an act of contrition, renounced Satan and all his works once again, and commended his soul to God.

Four men entered, his legs were freed from the boards, and the crushed parts were found to be a mere inert mass, only attached to the knees by the sinews. He was then carried to the council chamber, and laid on a little straw before the fire.

In a corner of the fireplace an Augustinian monk was seated. Urbain asked leave to confess to him, which de Laubardemont refused, holding out the paper he desired to have signed once more, at which Grandier said—

"If I would not sign to spare myself before, am I likely to give way now that only death remains?"

"True," replied Laubardemont; "but the mode of your death is in our hands: it rests with us to make it slow or quick, painless or agonising; so take this paper and sign."

Grandier pushed the paper gently away, shaking his head in sign of refusal, whereupon de Laubardemont left the room in a fury, and ordered Pères Tranquille and Claude to be admitted, they being the confessors he had chosen for Urbain. When they came near to fulfil their office, Urbain recognised in them two of his torturers, so he said that, as it was only four days since he had confessed to

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Père Grillau, and he did not believe he had committed any mortal sin since then, he would not trouble them, upon which they cried out at him as a heretic and infidel, but without any effect.

At four o'clock the executioner's assistants came to fetch him; he was placed lying on a bier and carried out in that position. On the way he met the criminal lieutenant of Orleans, who once more exhorted him to confess his crimes openly; but Grandier replied—

"Alas, sir, I have avowed them all; I have kept nothing back."

"Do you desire me to have masses said for you?" continued the lieutenant.

"I not only desire it, but I beg for it as a great favour," said Urbain.

A lighted torch was then placed in his hand: as the procession started he pressed the torch to his lips; he looked on all whom he met with modest confidence, and begged those whom he knew to intercede with God for him. On the threshold of the door his sentence was read to him, and he was then placed in a small cart and driven to the church of St. Pierre in the market-place. There he was awaited by M. de Laubardemont, who ordered him to alight. As he could not stand on his mangled limbs, he was pushed out, and fell first on his knees and then on his face. In this position he remained

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patiently waiting to be lifted. He was carried to the top of the steps and laid down, while his sentence was read to him once more, and just as it was finished, his confessor, who had not been allowed to see him for four days, forced a way through the crowd and threw himself into Grandier's arms. At first tears choked Père Grillau's voice, but at last he said, "Remember, sir, that our Saviour Jesus Christ ascended to His Father through the agony of the Cross: you are a wise man, do not give way now and lose everything. I bring you your mother's blessing; she and I never cease to pray that God may have mercy on you and receive you into Paradise."

These words seemed to inspire Grandier with new strength; he lifted his head, which pain had bowed, and raising his eyes to heaven, murmured a short prayer. Then turning towards the worthy friar, he said—

"Be a son to my mother; pray to God for me constantly; ask all our good friars to pray for my soul; my one consolation is that I die innocent. I trust that God in His mercy may receive me into Paradise."

"Is there nothing else I can do for you?" asked Père Grillau.

"Alas, my father!" replied Grandier, "I am condemned to die a most cruel death; ask the execu-

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tioner if there is no way of shortening what I must undergo."

"I go at once," said the friar; and giving him absolution *in articulo mortis,* he went down the steps, and while Grandier was making his confession aloud the good monk drew the executioner aside and asked if there were no possibility of alleviating the death-agony by means of a shirt dipped in brimstone. The executioner answered that as the sentence expressly stated that Grandier was to be burnt alive, he could not employ an expedient so sure to be discovered as that; but that if the friar would give him thirty crowns he would undertake to strangle Grandier while he was kindling the pile. Père Grillau gave him the money, and the executioner provided himself with a rope. The Franciscan then placed himself where he could speak to his penitent as he passed, and as he embraced him for the last time, whispered to him what he had arranged with the executioner, whereupon Grandier turned towards the latter and said in a tone of deep gratitude—

"Thanks, my brother."

At that moment, the archers having driven away Père Grillau, by order of M. de Laubardemont, by beating him with their halberts, the procession resumed its march, to go through the same ceremony at the Ursuline church, and from there to proceed to

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the square of Sainte-Croix. On the way Urbain met and recognised Moussant, who was accompanied by his wife, and turning towards him, said—

"I die your debtor, and if I have ever said a word that could offend you I ask you to forgive me."

When the place of execution was reached, the provost's lieutenant approached Grandier and asked his forgiveness.

"You have not offended me," was the reply; "you have only done what your duty obliged you to do."

The executioner then came forward and removed the back board of the cart, and ordered his assistants to carry Grandier to where the pile was prepared. As he was unable to stand, he was attached to the stake by an iron hoop passed round his body. At that moment a flock of pigeons seemed to fall from the sky, and, fearless of the crowd, which was so great that the archers could not succeed even by blows of their weapons in clearing a way for the magistrates, began to fly around Grandier, while one, as white as the driven snow, alighted on the summit of the stake, just above his head. Those who believed in possession exclaimed that they were only a band of devils come to seek their master, but there were many who muttered that devils were not wont to assume such a form, and who persisted in

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believing that the doves had come in default of men to bear witness to Grandier's innocence.

In trying next day to combat this impression, a monk asserted that he had seen a huge fly buzzing round Grandier's head, and as Beelzebub meant in Hebrew, as he said, the god of flies, it was quite evident that it was that demon himself who, taking upon him the form of one of his subjects, had come to carry off the magician's soul.

When everything was prepared, the executioner passed the rope by which he meant to strangle him round Grandier's neck; then the priests exorcised the earth, air, and wood, and again demanded of their victim if he would not publicly confess his crimes. Urbain replied that he had nothing to say, but that he hoped through the martyr's death he was about to die to be that day with Christ in Paradise.

The clerk then read his sentence to him for the fourth time, and asked if he persisted in what he said under torture.

"Most certainly I do," said Urbain; "for it was the exact truth."

Upon this, the clerk withdrew, first informing Grandier that if he had anything to say to the people he was at liberty to speak.

But this was just what the exorcists did not want: they knew Grandier's eloquence and courage, and

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"Then sign this, and the torture shall cease," answered the Commissioner Royal, offering him a paper.

—p. 1381

From the original illustration by Bourdet

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a firm, unshaken denial at the moment of death would be most prejudicial to their interests. As soon, therefore, as Grandier opened his lips to speak, they dashed such a quantity of holy water in his face that it took away his breath. It was but for a moment, however, and he recovered himself, and again endeavoured to speak, a monk stooped down and stifled the words by kissing him on the lips. Grandier, guessing his intention, said loud enough for those next the pile to hear, "That was the kiss of Judas!"

At these words the monks become so enraged that one of them struck Grandier three times in the face with a crucifix, while he appeared to be giving it him to kiss; but by the blood that flowed from his nose and lips at the third blow those standing near perceived the truth: all Grandier could do was to call out that he asked for a *Salve Regina* and an *Ave Maria,* which many began at once to repeat, whilst he with clasped hands and eyes raised to heaven commended himself to God and the Virgin. The exorcists then made one more effort to get him to confess publicly, but he exclaimed—

"My fathers, I have said all I had to say; I hope in God and in His mercy."

At this refusal the anger of the exorcists surpassed all bounds, and Père Lactance, taking a twist of straw, dipped it in a bucket of pitch which was

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standing beside the pile, and lighting it at a torch, thrust it into his face, crying—

"Miserable wretch! will nothing force you to confess your crimes and renounce the devil?"

"I do not belong to the devil," said Grandier, pushing away the straw with his hands; "I have renounced the devil, I now renounce him and all his works again, and I pray that God may have mercy on me."

At this, without waiting for the signal from the provost's lieutenant, Père Lactance poured the bucket of pitch on one corner of the pile of wood and set fire to it, upon which Grandier called the executioner to his aid, who, hastening up, tried in vain to strangle him, while the flames spread apace.

"Ah! my brother," said the sufferer, "is this the way you keep your promise?"

"It's not my fault," answered the executioner; "the monks have knotted the cord, so that the noose cannot slip."

"Oh, Father Lactance! Father Lactance! have you no charity?" cried Grandier.

The executioner by this time was forced by the increasing heat to jump down from the pile, being indeed almost overcome; and seeing this, Grandier stretched forth a hand into the flames, and said—

"Père Lactance, God in heaven will judge be-

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tween thee and me; I summon thee to appear before Him in thirty days."

Grandier was then seen to make attempts to strangle himself, but either because it was impossible, or because he felt it would be wrong to end his life by his own hands, he desisted, and clasping his hands, prayed aloud—

"*Deus meus, ad te vigilo, miserere mêi.*"

A Capuchin fearing that he would have time to say more, approached the pile from the side which had not yet caught fire, and dashed the remainder of the holy water in his face. This caused such smoke that Grandier was hidden for a moment from the eyes of the spectators; when it cleared away, it was seen that his clothes were now alight; his voice could still be heard from the midst of the flames raised in prayer; then three times, each time in a weaker voice, he pronounced the name of Jesus, and giving one cry, his head fell forward on his breast.

At that moment the pigeons which had till then never ceased to circle round the stake, flew away, and were lost in the clouds.

Urbain Grandier had given up the ghost.

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CHAPTER XII

THIS time it was not the man who was executed who was guilty, but the executioners; consequently we feel sure that our readers will be anxious to learn something of their fate.

Père Lactance died in the most terrible agony on September 18th, 1634, exactly a month from the date of Grandier's death. His brother-monks considered that this was due to the vengeance of Satan; but others were not wanting who said, remembering the summons uttered by Grandier, that it was rather due to the justice of God. Several attendant circumstances seemed to favour the latter opinion. The author of the *History of the Devils of Loudun* gives an account of one of these circumstances, for the authenticity of which he vouches, and from which we extract the following:—

"Some days after the execution of Grandier, Père Lactance fell ill of the disease of which he died. Feeling that it was of supernatural origin, he determined to take a pilgrimage to Notre-Dame des Andilliers de Saumur, where many miracles

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were wrought, and which was held in high estimation in the neighbourhood. A place in the carriage of the Sieur de Canaye was offered him for the journey; for this gentleman, accompanied by a large party on pleasure bent, was just then setting out for his estate of Grand Fonds, which lay in the same direction. The reason for the offer was that Canaye and his friends, having heard that the last words of Grandier had affected Père Lactance's mind, expected to find a great deal of amusement in exciting the terrors of their travelling-companion. And in truth, for a day or two, the boon companions sharpened their wits at the expense of the worthy monk, when all at once, on a good road and without apparent cause, the carriage overturned. Though no one was hurt, the accident appeared so strange to the pleasure-seekers that it put an end to the jokes of even the boldest among them. Père Lactance himself appeared melancholy and preoccupied, and that evening at supper refused to eat, repeating over and over again—

"'It was wrong of me to deny Grandier the confessor he asked for; God is punishing me, God is punishing me!'

"On the following morning the journey was resumed, but the evident distress of mind under which Père Lactance laboured had so damped the spirits of the party that all their gaiety had dis-

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appeared. Suddenly, just outside Fenet, where the road was in excellent condition and no obstacle to their progress apparent, the carriage upset for the second time. Although again no one was hurt, the travellers felt that there was among them someone against whom God's anger was turned, and their suspicions pointing to Père Lactance, they went on their way, leaving him behind, and feeling very uncomfortable at the thought that they had spent two or three days in his society.

"Lactance at last reached Notre-Dame des Andilliers; but however numerous were the miracles there performed, the remission of the doom pronounced by the martyr on Père Lactance was not added to their number; and at a quarter-past six on September 18th, exactly a month to the very minute after Grandier's death, Père Lactance expired in excruciating agony."

Père Tranquille's turn came four years later. The malady which attacked him was so extraordinary that the physicians were quite at a loss, and forced to declare their ignorance of any remedy. His shrieks and blasphemies were so distinctly heard in the streets, that his brother Franciscans, fearing the effect they would have on his after-reputation, especially in the minds of those who had seen Grandier die with words of prayer on his lips, spread

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abroad the report that the devils whom he had expelled from the bodies of the nuns had entered into the body of the exorcist. He died shrieking—

"My God! how I suffer! Not all the devils and all the damned together endure what I endure!"

His panegyrist, in whose book we find all the horrible details of his death employed to much purpose to illustrate the advantages of belonging to the true faith, remarks—

"Truly his generous heart must have been a hot hell for those fiends who entered his body to torment it."

The following epitaph which was placed over his grave was interpreted, according to the prepossessions of those who read it, either as a testimony to his sanctity or as a proof of his punishment:—

"Here lies Père Tranquille, of Saint-Remi; a humble Capuchin preacher. The demons no longer able to endure his fearlessly exercised power as an exorcist, and encouraged by sorcerers, tortured him to death, on May 31st, 1638."

But a death about which there could be no doubt as to the cause was that of the surgeon Mannouri, the same who had, as the reader may recollect, been the first to torture Grandier. One evening about ten o'clock he was returning from a visit to a pa-

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tient who lived on the outskirts of the town, accompanied by a colleague and preceded by his surgery attendant carrying a lantern. When they reached the centre of the town in the rue Grand-Pavé, which passes between the walls of the castle grounds and the gardens of the Franciscan monastery, Mannouri suddenly stopped, and, staring fixedly at some object which was invisible to his companions, exclaimed with a start—

"Oh! there is Grandier!"

"Where? where?" cried the others.

He pointed in the direction towards which his eyes were turned, and beginning to tremble violently, asked—

"What do you want with me, Grandier? What do you want?"

A moment later he added—

"Yes—yes, I am coming."

Immediately it seemed as if the vision vanished from before his eyes, but the effect remained. His brother-surgeon and the servant brought him home, but neither candles nor the light of day could allay his fears; his disordered brain showed him Grandier ever standing at the foot of his bed. A whole week he continued, as was known all over the town, in this condition of abject terror; then the spectre seemed to move from its place and gradually to draw nearer, for he kept on repeating, "He is coming!

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he is coming!" and at length, towards evening, at about the same hour at which Grandier expired, Surgeon Mannouri drew his last breath.

We have still to tell of M. de Laubardemont. All we know is thus related in the letters of M. de Patin:—

"On the 9th inst., at nine o'clock in the evening, a carriage was attacked by robbers; on hearing the noise the townspeople ran to the spot, drawn thither as much by curiosity as by humanity. A few shots were exchanged and the robbers put to flight, with the exception of one man belonging to their band who was taken prisoner, and another who lay wounded on the paving-stones. This latter died next day without having spoken, and left no clue behind as to who he was. His identity was, however, at length made clear. He was the son of a high dignitary named de Laubardemont, who in 1634, as royal commissioner, condemned Urbain Grandier, a poor priest of Loudun, to be burnt alive, under the pretence that he had caused several nuns of Loudun to be possessed by devils. These nuns he had so tutored as to their behaviour that many people foolishly believed them to be demoniacs. May we not regard the fate of his son as a chastisement inflicted by Heaven on this unjust judge—an expiation exacted for the pitilessly cruel death in-

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flicted on his victim, whose blood still cries unto the Lord from the ground?"

Naturally the persecution of Urbain Grandier attracted the attention not only of journalists but of poets. Among the many poems which were inspired by it, the following is one of the best. Urbain speaks:—

"From hell came the tidings that by horrible sanctions
I had made a pact with the devil to have power over women:
Though not one could be found to accuse me.
In the trial which delivered me to torture and the stake,
The demon who accused me invented and suggested the crime,
And his testimony was the only proof against me.

The English in their rage burnt the Maid alive;
Like her, I too fell a victim to revenge;
We were both accused falsely of the same crime;
In Paris she is adored, in London abhorred;
In Loudun some hold me guilty of witchcraft,
Some believe me innocent; some halt between two minds.

Like Hercules, I loved passionately;
Like him, I was consumed by fire;
But he by death became a god.
The injustice of my death was so well concealed
That no one can judge whether the flames saved or destroyed me;
Whether they blackened me for hell, or purified me for heaven.

In vain did I suffer torments with unshaken resolution;
They said that I felt no pain, being a sorcerer, and died unrepentant;
That the prayers I uttered were impious words;
That in kissing the image on the cross I spat in its face;
That casting my eyes to heaven I mocked the saints;
That when I seemed to call on God, I invoked the devil.

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Others, more charitable, say, in spite of their hatred of my crime,
That my death may be admired although my life was not blameless;
That my resignation showed that I died in hope and faith;
That to forgive, to suffer without complaint or murmur,
Is perfect love; and that the soul is purified
From the sins of life by a death like mine."

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NISIDA

1825

IF our readers, tempted by the Italian proverb about seeing Naples and then dying, were to ask us what is the most favourable moment for visiting the enchanted city, we should advise them to land at the mole, or at Mergellina, on a fine summer day and at the hour when some solemn procession is moving out of the cathedral. Nothing can give an idea of the profound and simple-hearted emotion of this populace, which has enough poetry in its soul to believe in its own happiness. The whole town adorns herself and attires herself like a bride for her wedding; the dark façades of marble and granite disappear beneath hangings of silk and festoons of flowers; the wealthy display their dazzling luxury, the poor drape themselves proudly in their rags. Everything is light, harmony, and perfume; the sound is like the hum of an immense hive, interrupted by a thousandfold outcry of joy impossible to describe. The bells repeat their sonorous sequences in every key; the arcades echo afar with the

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triumphal marches of military bands; the sellers of sherbet and water-melons sing out their deafening flourish from throats of copper. People form into groups; they meet, question, gesticulate; there are gleaming looks, eloquent gestures, picturesque attitudes; there is a general animation, an unknown charm, an indefinable intoxication. Earth is very near to heaven, and it is easy to understand that, if God were to banish death from this delightful spot, the Neapolitans would desire no other paradise.

The story that we are about to tell opens with one of these magical pictures. It was the Day of the Assumption in the year 1825; the sun had been up some four or five hours, and the long Via da Forcella, lighted from end to end by its slanting rays, cut the town in two, like a ribbon of watered silk. The lava pavement, carefully cleaned, shone like any mosaic, and the royal troops, with their proudly waving plumes, made a double living hedge on each side of the street. The balconies, windows, and terraces, the stands with their unsubstantial balustrades, and the wooden galleries set up during the night, were loaded with spectators, and looked not unlike the boxes of a theatre. An immense crowd, forming a medley of the brightest colours, invaded the reserved space and broke through the military barriers, here and there, like an overflowing torrent. These intrepid sightseers,

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nailed to their places, would have waited half their lives without giving the least sign of impatience.

At last, about noon, a cannon-shot was heard, and a cry of general satisfaction followed it. It was the signal that the procession had crossed the threshold of the church. In the same moment a charge of carabineers swept off the people who were obstructing the middle of the street, the regiments of the line opened floodgates for the overflowing crowd, and soon nothing remained on the causeway but some scared dog, shouted at by the people, hunted off by the soldiers, and fleeing at full speed. The procession came out through the Via di Vescovato. First came the guilds of merchants and craftsmen, the hatters, weavers, bakers, butchers, cutlers, and goldsmiths. They wore the prescribed dress: black coats, knee breeches, low shoes and silver buckles. As the countenances of these gentlemen offered nothing very interesting to the multitude, whisperings arose, little by little, among the spectators, then some bold spirits ventured a jest or two upon the fattest or the baldest of the townsmen, and at last the boldest of the *lazzaroni* slipped between the soldiers' legs to collect the wax that was running down from the lighted tapers.

After the craftsmen, the religious orders marched past, from the Dominicans to the Carthusians, from the Carmelites to the Capuchins. They advanced

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slowly, their eyes cast down, their step austere, their hands on their hearts; some faces were rubicund and shining, with large cheek-bones and rounded chins, herculean heads upon bull-necks; some, thin and livid, with cheeks hollowed by suffering and penitence, and with the look of living ghosts; in short, here were the two sides of monastic life.

At this moment, Nunziata and Gelsomina, two charming damsels, taking advantage of an old corporal's politeness, pushed forward their pretty heads into the first rank. The break in the line was conspicuous; but the sly warrior seemed just a little lax in the matter of discipline.

"Oh, there is Father Bruno!" said Gelsomina suddenly. "Good-day, Father Bruno."

"Hush, cousin! People do not talk to the procession."

"How absurd! He is my confessor. May I not say good-morning to my confessor?"

"Silence, chatterboxes!"

"Who was that spoke?"

"Oh, my dear, it was Brother Cucuzza, the begging friar."

"Where is he? Where is he?"

"There he is, along there, laughing into his beard. How bold he is!"

"Ah, God in heaven! If we were to dream of him——"

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While the two cousins were pouring out endless comments upon the Capuchins and their beards, the capes of the canons and the surplices of the seminarists, the *feroci* came running across from the other side to re-establish order with the help of their gun-stocks.

"By the blood of my patron saint," cried a stentorian voice, "if I catch you between my finger and thumb, I will straighten your back for the rest of your days."

"Who are you falling out with, Gennaro?"

"With this accursed hunchback, who has been worrying my back for the last hour, as though he could see through it."

"It is a shame," returned the hunchback in a tone of lamentation; "I have been here since last night, I slept out of doors to keep my place, and here is this abominable giant comes to stick himself in front of me like an obelisk."

The hunchback was lying like a Jew, but the crowd rose unanimously against the obelisk. He was, in one way, their superior, and majorities are always made up of pigmies.

"Hi! Come down from your stand!"

"Hi! get off your pedestal!"

"Off with your hat!"

"Down with your head!"

"Sit down!"

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"Lie down!"

This revival of curiosity expressing itself in invectives evidently betokened the crisis of the show. And indeed the chapters of canons, the clergy and bishops, the pages and chamberlains, the representatives of the city, and the gentlemen of the king's chamber now appeared, and finally the king himself, who, bare-headed and carrying a taper, followed the magnificent statue of the Virgin. The contrast was striking: after the grey-headed monks and pale novices came brilliant young captains, affronting heaven with the points of their moustaches, riddling the latticed windows with killing glances, following the procession in an absent-minded way, and interrupting the holy hymns with scraps of most unorthodox conversation.

"Did you notice, my dear Doria, how like a monkey the old Marchesa d'Acquasparta takes her raspberry ice?"

"Her nose takes the colour of the ice. What fine bird is showing off to her?"

"It is the Cyrenian."

"I beg your pardon! I have not seen that name in the Golden Book."

"He helps the poor marquis to bear his cross."

The officer's profane allusion was lost in the prolonged murmur of admiration that suddenly rose from the crowd, and every gaze was turned

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upon one of the young girls who was strewing flowers before the holy Madonna. She was an exquisite creature. Her head glowing in the sunshine, her feet hidden amid roses and broom-blossom, she rose, tall and fair, from a pale cloud of incense, like some seraphic apparition. Her hair, of velvet blackness, fell in curls half-way down her shoulders; her brow, white as alabaster and polished as a mirror, reflected the rays of the sun; her beautiful and finely arched black eye-brows melted into the opal of her temples; her eyelids were cast down, and the curled black fringe of lashes veiled a glowing and liquid glance of divine emotion; the nose, straight, slender, and cut by two easy nostrils, gave to her profile that character of antique beauty which is vanishing day by day from the earth. A calm and serene smile, one of those smiles that have already left the soul and not yet reached the lips, lifted the corners of her mouth with a pure expression of infinite beatitude and gentleness. Nothing could be more perfect than the chin that completed the faultless oval of this radiant countenance; her neck of a dead white, joined her bosom in a delicious curve, and supported her head gracefully like the stalk of a flower moved by a gentle breeze. A bodice of crimson velvet spotted with gold outlined her delicate and finely curved figure, and held in by means of a

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handsome gold lace the countless folds of a full and flowing skirt, that fell to her feet like those severe robes in which the Byzantine painters preferred to drape their angels. She was indeed a marvel, and so rare and modest a beauty had not been seen within the memory of man.

Among those who had gazed most persistently at her was observed the young Prince of Brancaleone, one of the foremost nobles of the kingdom. Handsome, rich, and brave, he had, at five-and-twenty, outdone the lists of all known Don Juans. Fashionable young women spoke very ill of him and adored him in secret; the most virtuous made it their rule to fly from him, so impossible did resistance appear. All the young madcaps had chosen him for their model; for his triumphs robbed many a Miltiades of sleep, and with better cause. In short, to get an idea of this lucky individual, it will be enough to know that as a seducer he was the most perfect thing that the devil had succeeded in inventing in this progressive century. The prince was dressed out for the occasion in a sufficiently grotesque costume, which he wore with ironic gravity and cavalier ease. A black satin doublet, knee breeches, embroidered stockings, and shoes with gold buckles, formed the main portions of his dress, over which trailed a long brocaded open-sleeved robe lined with ermine, and a magnificent diamond-

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hilted sword. On account of his rank he enjoyed the rare distinction of carrying one of the six gilded staves that supported the plumed and embroidered canopy.

As soon as the procession moved on again, Eligi of Brancaleone gave a side glance to a little man as red as a lobster, who was walking almost at his side, and carrying in his right hand, with all the solemnity that he could muster, his excellency's hat. He was a footman in gold-laced livery, and we beg leave to give a brief sketch of his history. Trespolo was the child of poor but thieving parents, and on that account was early left an orphan. Being at leisure, he studied life from an eminently social aspect. If we are to believe a certain ancient sage, we are all in the world to solve a problem: as to Trespolo, he desired to live without doing anything; that was his problem. He was, in turn, a sacristan, a juggler, an apothecary's assistant, and a cicerone, and he got tired of all these callings. Begging was, to his mind, too hard work, and it was more trouble to be a thief than to be an honest man. Finally he decided in favour of contemplative philosophy. He had a passionate preference for the horizontal position, and found the greatest pleasure in the world in watching the shooting of stars. Unfortunately, in the course of his meditations this deserving man came near to dying of hunger; which

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would have been a great pity, for he was beginning to accustom himself not to eat anything. But as he was predestined by nature to play a small part in our story, God showed him grace for that time, and sent to his assistance—not one of His angels, the rogue was not worthy of that, but—one of Brancaleone's hunting dogs. The noble animal sniffed round the philosopher, and uttered a little charitable growl that would have done credit to one of the brethren of Mount St. Bernard. The prince, who was returning in triumph from hunting, and who, by good luck, had that day killed a bear and ruined a countess, had an odd inclination to do a good deed. He approached the plebeian who was about to pass into the condition of a corpse, stirred the thing with his foot, and seeing that there was still a little hope, bade his people bring him along.

From that day onward, Trespolo saw the dream of his life nearly realised. Something rather above a footman and rather below a house steward, he became the confidant of his master, who found his talents most useful; for this Trespolo was as sharp as a demon and almost as artful as a woman. The prince, who, like an intelligent man as he was, had divined that genius is naturally indolent, asked nothing of him but advice; when tiresome people wanted thrashing, he saw to that matter himself,

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and, indeed, he was the equal of any two at such work. As nothing in this lower world, however, is complete, Trespolo had strange moments amid this life of delights; from time to time his happiness was disturbed by panics that greatly diverted his master; he would mutter incoherent words, stifle violent sighs, and lose his appetite. The root of the matter was that the poor fellow was afraid of going to hell. The matter was very simple: he was afraid of everything; and, besides, it had often been preached to him that the Devil never allowed a moment's rest to those who were ill-advised enough to fall into his clutches. Trespolo was in one of his good moods of repentance, when the prince, after gazing on the young girl with the fierce eagerness of a vulture about to swoop upon its prey, turned to speak to his intimate adviser. The poor servant understood his master's abominable design, and not wishing to share the guilt of a sacrilegious conversation, opened his eyes very wide and turned them up to heaven in ecstatic contemplation. The prince coughed, stamped his foot, moved his sword so as to hit Trespolo's legs, but could not get from him any sign of attention, so absorbed did he appear in celestial thoughts. Brancaleone would have liked to wring his neck, but both his hands were occupied by the staff of the canopy; and besides, the king was present.

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At last they were drawing nearer to the church of St. Clara, where the Neapolitan kings were buried, and where several princesses of the blood, exchanging the crown for the veil, have gone to bury themselves alive. The nuns, novices, and abbess, hidden behind shutters, were throwing flowers upon the procession. A bunch fell at the feet of the Prince of Brancaleone.

"Trespolo, pick up that nosegay," said the prince, so audibly that his servant had no further excuse. "It is from Sister Theresa," he added, in a low voice; "constancy is only to be found, nowadays, in a convent."

Trespolo picked up the nosegay and came towards his master, looking like a man who was being strangled.

"Who is that girl?" the latter asked him shortly.

"Which one?" stammered the servant.

"Forsooth! The one walking in front of us."

"I don't know her, my lord."

"You must find out something about her before this evening."

"I shall have to go rather far afield."

"Then you do know her, you intolerable rascal! I have half a mind to have you hanged like a dog."

"For pity's sake, my lord, think of the salvation of your soul, of your eternal life."

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"I advise you to think of your temporal life. What is her name?"

"She is called Nisida, and is the prettiest girl in the island that she is named after. She is innocence itself. Her father is only a poor fisherman, but I can assure your excellency that in his island he is respected like a king."

"Indeed!" replied the prince, with an ironical smile. "I must own, to my great shame, that I have never visited the little island of Nisida. You will have a boat ready for me to-morrow, and then we will see——"

He interrupted himself suddenly, for the king was looking at him; and calling up the most sonorous bass notes that he could find in the depths of his throat, he continued with an inspired air, "*Genitori genitoque laus et jubilatio.*"[1]

"Amen," replied the serving-man in a ringing voice.

Nisida, the beloved daughter of Solomon, the fisherman, was, as we have said, the loveliest flower of the island from which she derived her name. That island is the most charming spot, the most delicious nook with which we are acquainted; it is a basket of greenery set delicately amid the pure and transparent waters of the gulf, a hill wooded with orange trees and oleanders, and crowned at the

[1] "To the Father and the Son, praise and rejoicing."

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summit by a marble castle. All around extends the fairy-like prospect of that immense amphitheatre, one of the mightiest wonders of creation. There lies Naples, the voluptuous syren, reclining carelessly on the seashore; there, Portici, Castellamare, and Sorrento, the very names of which awaken in the imagination a thousand thoughts of poetry and love; there are Pausilippo, Baiæ, Puozzoli, and those vast plains, where the ancients fancied their Elysium, sacred solitudes which one might suppose peopled by the men of former days, where the earth echoes under foot like an empty grave, and the air has unknown sounds and strange melodies.

Solomon's hut stood in that part of the island which, turning its back to the capital, beholds afar the blue crests of Capri. Nothing could be simpler or brighter. The brick walls were hung with ivy greener than emeralds, and enamelled with white bell-flowers; on the ground floor was a fairly spacious apartment, in which the men slept and the family took their meals; on the floor above was Nisida's little maidenly room, full of coolness, shadows, and mystery, and lighted by a single casement that looked over the gulf; above this room was a terrace of the Italian kind, the four pillars of which were wreathed with vine branches, while its vine-clad arbour and wide parapet were over-

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grown with moss and wild flowers. A little hedge of hawthorn, which had been respected for ages, made a kind of rampart around the fisherman's premises, and defended his house better than deep moats and castellated walls could have done. The boldest roisterers of the place would have preferred to fight before the parsonage and in the precincts of the church rather than in front of Solomon's little enclosure. Otherwise, this was the meeting-place of the whole island. Every evening, precisely at the same hour, the good women of the neighbourhood came to knit their woollen caps and tell the news. Groups of little children, naked, brown, and as mischievous as little imps, sported about, rolling on the grass and throwing handfuls of sand into the other's eyes, heedless of the risk of blinding, while their mothers were engrossed in that grave gossip which marks the dwellers in villages. These gatherings occurred daily before the fisherman's house; they formed a tacit and almost involuntary homage, consecrated by custom, and of which no one had ever taken special account; the envy that rules in small communities would soon have suppressed them. The influence which old Solomon had over his equals had grown so simply and naturally, that no one found any fault with it, and it had only attracted notice when everyone was benefiting by it, like those fine trees whose growth

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is only observed when we profit by their shade. If any dispute arose in the island, the two opponents preferred to abide by the judgment of the fisherman instead of going before the court; he was fortunate enough or clever enough to send away both parties satisfied. He knew what remedies to prescribe better than any physician, for it seldom happened that he or his had not felt the same ailments, and his knowledge, founded on personal experience, produced the most excellent results. Moreover, he had no interest, as ordinary doctors have, in prolonging illnesses. For many years past the only formality recognised as a guarantee for the inviolability of a contract had been the intervention of the fisherman. Each party shook hands with Solomon, and the thing was done. They would rather have thrown themselves into Vesuvius at the moment of its most violent eruption than have broken so solemn an agreement. At the period when our story opens, it was impossible to find any person in the island who had not felt the effects of the fisherman's generosity, and that without needing to confess to him any necessities. As it was the custom for the little populace of Nisida to spend its leisure hours before Solomon's cottage, the old man, while he walked slowly among the different groups, humming his favourite song, discovered moral and physical weaknesses as he passed; and the same evening he

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or his daughter would certainly be seen coming mysteriously to bestow a benefit upon every sufferer, to lay a balm upon every wound. In short, he united in his person all those occupations whose business is to help mankind. Lawyers, doctors, and the notary, all the vultures of civilisation, had beaten a retreat before the patriarchal benevolence of the fisherman. Even the priest had capitulated.

On the morrow of the Feast of the Assumption, Solomon was sitting, as his habit was, on a stone bench in front of his house, his legs crossed and his arms carelessly stretched out. At the first glance you would have taken him for sixty at the outside, though he was really over eighty. He had all his teeth, which were as white as pearls, and showed them proudly. His brow, calm and restful beneath its crown of abundant white hair, was as firm and polished as marble; not a wrinkle ruffled the corner of his eye, and the gem-like lustre of his blue orbs revealed a freshness of soul and an eternal youth such as fable grants to the sea-gods. He displayed his bare arms and muscular neck with an old man's vanity. Never had a gloomy idea, an evil prepossession, or a keen remorse, arisen to disturb his long and peaceful life. He had never seen a tear flow near him without hurrying to wipe it; poor though he was, he had succeeded in pouring out

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benefits that all the kings of the earth could not have bought with their gold; ignorant though he was, he had spoken to his fellows the only language that they could understand, the language of the heart. One single drop of bitterness had mingled with his inexhaustible stream of happiness; one grief only had clouded his sunny life—the death of his wife—and moreover he had forgotten that.

All the affections of his soul were turned upon Nisida, whose birth had caused her mother's death; he loved her with that immoderate love that old people have for the youngest of their children. At the present moment he was gazing upon her with an air of profound rapture, and watching her come and go, as she now joined the groups of children and scolded them for games too dangerous or too noisy; now seated herself on the grass beside their mothers and took part with grave and thoughtful interest in their talk. Nisida was more beautiful thus than she had been the day before; with the vaporous cloud of perfume that had folded her round from head to foot had disappeared all that mystic poetry which put a sort of constraint upon her admirers and obliged them to lower their glances. She had become a daughter of Eve again without losing anything of her charm. Simply dressed, as she usually was on work-days, she was distinguishable among her companions only by her amaz-

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ing beauty and by the dazzling whiteness of her skin. Her beautiful black hair was twisted in plaits around the little dagger of chased silver, that has lately been imported into Paris by that right of conquest which the pretty women of Paris have over the fashions of all countries, like the English over the sea.

Nisida was adored by her young friends, all the mothers had adopted her with pride; she was the glory of the island. The opinion of her superiority was shared by everyone to such a degree, that if some bold young man, forgetting the distance which divided him from the maiden, dared speak a little too loudly of his pretensions, he became the laughing-stock of his companions. Even the past masters of tarentella dancing were out of countenance before the daughter of Solomon, and did not dare to seek her as a partner. Only a few singers from Amalfi or Sorrento, attracted by the rare beauty of this angelic creature, ventured to sigh out their passion, carefully veiled beneath the most delicate allusions. But they seldom reached the last verse of their song; at every sound they stopped short, threw down their triangles and their mandolines, and took flight like scared nightingales.

One only had courage enough or passion enough to brave the mockery; this was Bastiano, the most formidable diver of that coast. He also sang, but

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with a deep and hollow voice; his chant was mournful and his melodies full of sadness. He never accompanied himself upon any instrument, and never retired without concluding his song. That day he was gloomier than usual; he was standing upright, as though by enchantment, upon a bare and slippery rock, and he cast scornful glances upon the women who were looking at him and laughing. The sun, which was plunging into the sea like a globe of fire, shed its light full upon his stern features, and the evening breeze, as it lightly rippled the billows, set the fluttering reeds waving at his feet. Absorbed by dark thoughts, he sang, in the musical language of his country, these sad words:—

"O window, that wert used to shine in the night like an open eye, how dark thou art! Alas, alas! my poor sister is ill.

"Her mother, all in tears, stoops towards me and says, 'Thy poor sister is dead and buried.'

"Jesus! Jesus! Have pity on me! You stab me to the heart.

"Tell me, good neighbours, how it happened; repeat to me her last words.

"She had a burning thirst, and refused to drink because thou wast not there to give her water from thy hand.

"Oh, my sister! Oh, my sister!

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"She refused her mother's kiss, because thou wast not there to embrace her.

"Oh, my sister! Oh, my sister!

"She wept until her last breath, because thou wast not there to dry her tears.

"Oh, my sister! Oh, my sister!

"We placed on her brow her wreath of orange-flowers, we covered her with a veil as white as snow; we laid her gently in her coffin.

"Thanks, good neighbours. I will go and be with her.

"Two angels came down from heaven and bore her away on their wings. Mary Magdalene came to meet her at the gate of heaven.

"Thanks, good neighbours. I will go and be with her.

"There, she was seated in a place of glory, a chaplet of rubies was given to her, and she is singing her rosary with the Virgin.

"Thanks, good neighbours. I will go and be with her.

As he finished the last words of his melancholy refrain, he flung himself from the top of his rock into the sea, as though he really desired to engulf himself. Nisida and the other women gave a cry of terror, for during some minutes the diver failed to reappear upon the surface.

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"Are you out of your senses?" cried a young man who had suddenly appeared, unobserved among the women. "Why, what are you afraid of? You know very well that Bastiano is always doing things of this sort. But do not be alarmed: all the fishes in the Mediterranean will be drowned before any harm comes to him. Water is his natural element. Good-day, sister; good-day, father."

The young fisherman kissed Nisida on the forehead, drew near to his father, and, bowing his handsome head before him, took off his red cap and respectfully kissed the old man's hand. He came thus to ask his blessing every evening before putting out to sea, where he often spent the night fishing from his boat.

"May God bless thee, my Gabriel!" said the old man in a tone of emotion, as he slowly passed his hand over his son's black curls, and a tear came into his eye. Then, rising solemnly and addressing the groups around him, he added in a voice full of dignity and of gentleness. "Come, my children, it is time to separate. The young to work, the old to rest. There is the *angelus* ringing."

Everybody knelt, and after a short prayer each went on his way. Nisida, after having given her father the last daily attentions, went up to her room, replenished the oil in the lamp that burned day and night before the Virgin, and, leaning her

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elbow on the window ledge, divided the branches of jasmine which hung like perfumed curtains, began to gaze out at the sea, and seemed lost in a deep, sweet reverie.

At this very time, a little boat, rowed silently by two oarsmen, touched shore on the other side of the island. It had become quite dark. A little man first landed cautiously, and respectfully offered his hand to another individual, who, scorning that feeble support, leapt easily ashore.

"Well, knave," he cried, "are my looks to your taste?"

"Your lordship is perfect."

"I flatter myself I am. It is true that, in order to make the transformation complete, I chose the very oldest coat that displayed its rags in a Jew's shop."

"Your lordship looks like a heathen god engaged in a love affair. Jupiter has sheathed his thunderbolts and Apollo has pocketed his rays."

"A truce to your mythology. And, to begin with, I forbid you to call me 'your lordship.'"

"Yes, your lordship."

"If my information that I have procured during the day is correct, the house must be on the other side of the island, in a most remote and lonely spot. Walk at a certain distance, and do not trouble yourself about me, for I know my part by heart.'

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The young Prince of Brancaleone, whom, in spite of the darkness of the night, our readers will already have recognised, advanced towards the fisherman's house, with as little noise as possible, walked up and down several times upon the shore, and, after having briefly reconnoitred the place that he wished to attack, waited quietly for the moon to rise and light up the scene that he had prepared. He was not obliged to exercise his patience very long, for the darkness gradually disappeared, and Solomon's little house was bathed in silvery light. Then he approached with timid steps, lifted towards the casement a look of entreaty, and began to sigh with all the power of his lungs. The young girl, called suddenly from her meditations by the appearance of this strange person, raised herself sharply and prepared to close the shutters.

"Stay, charming Nisida!" cried the prince, in the manner of a man overcome by irresistible passion.

"What do you want with me, signor?" answered the maiden, amazed to hear herself called by name.

"To adore you as a Madonna is adored, and to make you aware of my sighs."

Nisida looked at him steadily, and, after a moment or two of reflection, asked suddenly, as though in response to some secret thought, "Do you belong to this country, or are you a foreigner?"

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"I arrived in this island," replied the prince without hesitation, "at the moment when the sun was writing his farewell to the earth and dipping the ray that serves as his pen into the shadow that serves as his inkstand."

"And who are you?" returned the young girl, not at all understanding these strange words.

"Alas! I am but a poor student, but I may become a great poet like Tasso, whose verses you often hear sung by a departing fisherman who sends his thrilling music as a last farewell that returns to die on the beach."

"I do not know whether I am doing wrong to speak to you, but at least I will be frank with you," said Nisida, blushing; "I have the misfortune to be the richest girl on the island."

"Your father will not be inexorable," returned the prince ardently; "one word from you, light of my eyes, goddess of my heart, and I will work night and day, never pausing nor slackening, and will render myself worthy to possess the treasure that God has revealed to my dazzled eyes, and, from being poor and obscure as you see me, I will become rich and powerful."

"I have stayed too long listening to talk that a maiden should not hear; permit me, signor, to withdraw."

"Have pity on me, my cruel enemy! What have

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I done to you that you should thus leave me with death in my soul? You do not know that, for months past, I have been following you everywhere like a shadow, that I prowl round your home at night, stifling my sighs lest they should disturb your peaceful slumber. You are afraid, perhaps, to let yourself be touched, at a first meeting, by a poor wretch who adores you. Alas! Juliet was young and beautiful like you, and she did not need many entreaties to take pity on Romeo."

Nisida suffered a sad and thoughtful look to fall upon this handsome young man who spoke to her in so gentle a voice, and withdrew without further reply, that she might not humiliate his poverty.

The prince made great efforts to suppress a strong inclination towards laughter, and, very well satisfied with this opening, turned his steps towards the spot where he had left his servant. Trespolo, after having emptied a bottle of lacryma with which he had provided himself for any emergency, had looked long around him to choose a spot where the grass was especially high and thick, and had laid himself down to a sound sleep, murmuring as he did so, this sublime observation, "O laziness, but for the sin of Adam you would be a virtue!"

The young girl could not close her eyes during the whole night after the conversation that she had held with the stranger. His sudden appearance, his

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strange dress and odd speech, had awakened in her an uncertain feeling that had been lying asleep in the bottom of her heart. She was at this time in all the vigour of her youth and of her resplendent beauty. Nisida was not one of the weak and timid natures that are broken by suffering or domineered over by tyranny. Far otherwise: everything around her had contributed towards shaping for her a calm and serene destiny; her simple, tender soul had unfolded in an atmosphere of peace and happiness. If she had not hitherto loved, it was the fault, not of her coldness but of the extreme timidity shown by the inhabitants of her island. The blind depth of respect that surrounded the old fisherman had drawn around his daughter a barrier of esteem and submission that no one dared to cross. By means of thrift and labour Solomon had succeeded in creating for himself a prosperity that put the poverty of the other fishermen to the blush. No one had asked for Nisida because no one thought he deserved her. The only admirer who had dared to show his passion openly was Bastiano, the most devoted and dearest friend of Gabriel; but Bastiano did not please her. So, trusting in her beauty, upheld by the mysterious hope that never deserts youth, she had resigned herself to wait, like some princess who knows that her betrothed will come from a far country.

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On the day of the Assumption she had left her island for the first time in her life, chance having chosen her among the maidens of the kingdom vowed by their mothers to the special protection of the Virgin. But, overwhelmed by the weight of a position so new to her, blushing and confused under the eyes of an immense crowd, she had scarcely dared to raise her wondering looks, and the splendours of the town had passed before her like a dream, leaving but a vague remembrance.

When she perceived the presence of this handsome young man, so slenderly and elegantly built, whose noble and calm demeanour contrasted with the timidity and awkwardness of her other admirers, she felt herself inwardly disturbed, and no doubt she would have believed that her prince had come, if she had been unpleasantly struck by the poverty of his dress. She had, nevertheless, allowed herself to listen to him longer than she ought to have done, and she drew back with her bosom heavy, her cheek on fire, and her heart rent by an ache that was both dull and sharp.

"If my father does not wish me to marry him," she said to herself, tormented by the first remorseful feeling of her life. "I shall have done wrong to speak to him. And yet he is so handsome!"

Then she knelt before the Virgin, who was her only confidante, the poor child having never known

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her mother, and tried to tell her the torments of her soul; but she could not achieve her prayer. The thoughts became entangled within her brain, and she surprised herself uttering strange words. But, assuredly, the Holy Virgin must have taken pity upon her lovely devotee, for she rose with the impression of a consoling thought, resolved to confide everything to her father.

"I cannot have a moment's doubt," she said to herself, as she unlaced her bodice, "of my father's affection. Well, then, if he forbids me to speak to him, it will be for my good. And indeed, I have seen him but this once," she added, as she threw herself upon the bed, "and now I think of it, I consider him very bold to dare to speak to me. I am almost inclined to laugh at him. How confidently he brought out his nonsense, how absurdly he rolled his eyes! They are really very fine, those eyes of his, and so is his mouth, and his forehead and his hair. He does not suspect that I noticed his hands, which are really very white, when he raised them to heaven, like a madman, as he walked up and down by the sea. Come, come, is he going to prevent my sleeping? I will not see him again!" she cried, drawing the sheet over her head like an angry child. Then she began to laugh to herself over her lover's dress, and meditated long upon what her companions would say to it. Suddenly

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her brow contracted painfully, a frightful thought had stolen into her mind, she shuddered from head to foot. "Suppose he were to think someone else prettier than me? Men are so foolish! Certainly, it is too hot, and I shall not sleep to-night."

Then she sat up in her bed, and continued her monologue—which we will spare the reader—till the morning. Scarcely had the first rays of light filtered through the interlacing branches of jasmine and wavered into the room, when Nisida dressed herself hurriedly, and went as usual to present her forehead to her father's kiss. The old man at once observed the depression and weariness left by a sleepless night upon his daughter's face, and parting with an eager and anxious hand the beautiful black hair that fell over her cheeks, he asked her, "What is the matter, my child? Thou hast not slept well?"

"I have not slept at all," answered Nisida, smiling, to reassure her father; "I am perfectly well, but I have something to confess to you."

"Speak quickly, child; I am dying with impatience."

"Perhaps I have done wrong; but I want you to promise beforehand not to scold me."

"You know very well that I spoil you," said the old man, with a caress; "I shall not begin to be stern to-day."

"A young man who does not belong to this

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island, and whose name I do not know, spoke to me yesterday evening when I was taking the air at my window."

"And what was he so eager to say to you, my dear Nisida?"

"He begged me to speak to you in his favour."

"I am listening. What can I do for him?"

"Order me to marry him."

"And should you obey willingly?"

"I think so, father," the girl candidly replied. "As to other things, you yourself must judge in your wisdom; for I wanted to speak to you before coming to know him, so as not to go on with a conversation that you might not approve. But there is a hindrance."

"You know that I do not recognise any when it is a question of making my daughter happy."

"He is poor, father."

"Well, all the more reason for me to like him. There is work here for everybody, and my table can spare a place for another son. He is young, he has arms; no doubt he has some calling."

"He is a poet."

"No matter; tell him to come and speak to me, and if he is an honest lad, I promise you, my child, that I will do anything in the world to promote your happiness."

Nisida embraced her father effusively, and was

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beside herself with joy all day, waiting impatiently for the evening in order to give the young man such splendid news. Eligi Brancaleone was but moderately flattered, as you will easily believe, by the fisherman's magnanimous intentions towards him; but like the finished seducer that he was, he appeared enchanted at them. Recollecting his character as a fantastical student and an out-at-elbows poet, he fell upon his knees and shouted a thanksgiving to the planet Venus; then, addressing the young girl, he added, in a calmer voice, that he was going to write immediately to his own father, who in a week's time would come to make his formal proposal; until then, he begged, as a favour, that he might not present himself to Solomon nor to any person at all in the island, and assigned as a pretext a certain degree of shame which he felt on account of his old clothes, assuring his beloved that his father would bring him a complete outfit for the wedding-day.

While the ill-starred girl was thus walking in terrifying security at the edge of the precipice, Trespolo, following his master's wishes, had established himself in the island as a pilgrim from Jerusalem. Playing his part and sprinkling his conversation with biblical phrases, which came to him readily, in his character of ex-sacristan, he distributed abundance of charms, wood of the true

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Cross and milk of the Blessed Virgin, and all those other inexhaustible treasures on which the eager devotion of worthy people daily feeds. His relics were the more evidently authentic in that he did not sell any of them, and, bearing his poverty in a holy manner, thanked the faithful and declined their alms. Only, out of regard for the established virtue of Solomon, he had consented to break bread with the fisherman, and went to take meals with him with the regularity of a cenobite. His abstinence aroused universal surprise: a crust dipped in water, a few nuts or figs sufficed to keep this holy man alive—to prevent him, that is to say, from dying. Furthermore, he entertained Nisida by his tales of his travels and by his mysterious predictions. Unfortunately, he only appeared towards evening; for he spent the rest of the day in austerities and in prayers—in other words, in drinking like a Turk and snoring like a buffalo.

On the morning of the seventh day, after the promise given by the prince to the fisherman's daughter, Brancaleone came into his servant's room, and, shaking him roughly, cried in his ear, "Up, odious marmot!"

Trespolo, awakened suddenly, rubbed his eyes in alarm. The dead, sleeping peacefully at the bottom of their coffins, will be less annoyed at the last day

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when the trump of Judgment comes to drag them from their slumbers. Fear having, however, immediately dispersed the dark clouds that overspread his countenance, he sat up, and asked with an appearance of bewilderment—

"What is the matter, your excellency?"

"The matter is that I will have you flayed alive a little if you do not leave off that execrable habit of sleeping twenty hours in the day."

"I was not asleep, prince!" cried the servant boldly, as he sprang out of bed; "I was reflecting——"

"Listen to me," said the prince in a severe tone; "you were once employed, I believe, in a chemist's shop?"

"Yes, my lord, and I left because my employer had the scandalous barbarity to make me pound drugs, which tired my arms horribly."

"Here is a phial containing a solution of opium."

"Mercy!" cried Trespolo, falling on his knees.

"Get up, idiot, and pay great attention to what I am going to say to you. This little fool of a Nisida persists in wanting me to speak to her father. I made her believe that I was going away this evening to fetch my papers. There is no time to lose. They know you very well at the fisherman's. You will pour this liquid into their wine; your life will answer for your not giving them a larger dose than

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enough to produce a deep sleep. You will take care to prepare me a good ladder for to-night; after which you will go and wait for me in my boat, where you will find Numa and Bonaroux. They have my orders. I shall not want you in scaling the fortress; I have my Campo Basso dagger."

"But, my lord——" stammered Trespolo, astounded.

"No difficulties!" cried the prince, stamping his foot furiously, "or, by my father's death, I will cure you, once for all, of your scruples." And he turned on his heel with the air of a man who is certain that people will be very careful not to disobey his orders.

The unhappy Trespolo fulfilled his master's injunctions punctually. With him fear was the guiding principle. That evening the fisherman's supper-table was hopelessly dull, and the sham pilgrim tried in vain to enliven it by factitious cheerfulness. Nisida was preoccupied by her lover's departure, and Solomon, sharing unconsciously in his daughter's grief, swallowed but a drop or two of wine, to avoid resisting the repeated urgency of his guest. Gabriel had set out in the morning for Sorrento and was not to return for two or three days; his absence tended to increase the old man's melancholy. As soon as Trespolo had retired, the fisherman yielded to his fatigue. Nisida, with her arms hang-

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ing by her sides, her head heavy and her heart oppressed by a sad presentiment, had scarcely strength to go up to her room, and after having mechanically trimmed the lamp, sank on her bed as pale and stiff as a corpse.

The storm was breaking out with violence; one of those terrible storms seen only in the South, when the congregated clouds, parting suddenly, shed torrents of rain and of hail, and threaten another deluge. The roar of the thunder drew nearer and was like the noise of a cannonade. The gulf, lately so calm and smooth that the island was reflected as in a mirror, had suddenly darkened; the furiously leaping waves flung themselves together like wild horses; the island quaked, shaken by terrible shocks. Even the boldest fishermen had drawn their boats ashore, and, shut within their cabins, encouraged as best they could their frightened wives and children.

Amid the deep darkness that overspread the sea Nisida's lamp could be seen gleaming clear and limpid, as it burned before the Madonna. Two boats, without rudders, sails, or oars, tossed by the waves, beaten by the winds, were whirling above the abyss; two men were in these two boats, their muscles tense, their breasts bare, their hair flying. They gazed haughtily on the sea, and braved the tempest.

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"Once more, I beg you," cried one of these men, "fear not for me, Gabriel; I promise you that with my two broken oars and a little perseverance I shall get to Torre before daybreak."

"You are mad, Bastiano; we have not been able ever since the morning to get near Vico, and have been obliged to keep tacking about; your skill and strength have been able to do nothing against this frightful hurricane which has driven us back to this point."

"It is the first time you have ever refused to go with me," remarked the young man.

"Well, yes, my dear Bastiano, I do not know how it is, but to-night I feel drawn to the island by an irresistible power. The winds have been unchained to bring me back to it in spite of myself, and I will own to you, even though it should make me seem like a madman in your eyes, that this simple and ordinary event appears to me like an order from heaven. Do you see that lamp shining over there?"

"I know it," answered Bastiano, suppressing a sigh.

"It was lighted before the Virgin on the day when my sister was born, and for eighteen years it has never ceased to burn, night and day. It was my mother's vow. You do not know, my dear Bastiano, you cannot know how many torturing

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thoughts that vow recalls to me. My poor mother called me to her deathbed and told me a frightful tale, a horrible secret, which weighs on my soul like a cloak of lead, and of which I can only relieve myself by confiding it to a friend. When her painful story was ended she asked to see and to embrace my sister, who was just born; then with her trembling hand, already chilled by the approach of death, she desired to light the lamp herself. 'Remember,' these were her last words, 'remember, Gabriel, that your sister is vowed to the Madonna. As long as this light shines before the blessed image of the Virgin, your sister will be in no danger.' You can understand now why, at night, when we are crossing the gulf, my eyes are always fixed on that lamp. I have a belief that nothing could shake, which is that on the day that light goes out my sister's soul will have taken flight to heaven."

"Well," cried Bastiano in an abrupt tone that betrayed the emotion of his heart, "if you prefer to stay, I will go alone."

"Farewell," said Gabriel, without turning aside his eyes from the window towards which he felt himself drawn by a fascination for which he could not account. Bastiano disappeared, and Nisida's brother, assisted by the waves, was drawing nearer and nearer to the shore, when, at all once, he uttered

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a terrible cry which sounded above the noise of the tempest.

The star had just been extinguished; the lamp had been blown out.

"My sister is dead!" cried Gabriel, and, leaping into the sea, he cleft the waves with the rapidity of lightning.

The storm had redoubled its intensity; long lines of lightning, rending the sides of the clouds, bathed everything in their tawny and intermittent light. The fisherman perceived a ladder leaning against the front of his home, seized it with a convulsive hand, and in three bounds flung himself into the room. The prince felt himself strangely moved on making his way into this pure and silent retreat. The calm and gentle gaze of the Virgin who seemed to be protecting the rest of the sleeping girl, that perfume of innocence shed around the maidenly couch, that lamp, open-eyed amid the shadows, like a soul in prayer, had inspired the seducer with an unknown distress. Irritated by what he called an absurd cowardice, he had extinguished the obtrusive light, and was advancing towards the bed, and addressing unspoken reproaches to himself, when Gabriel swooped upon him with a wounded tiger's fierce gnashing of the teeth.

Brancaleone, by a bold and rapid movement that showed no common degree of skill and bravery,

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while struggling in the grasp of his powerful adversary, drew forth in his right hand a long dagger with a fine barbed blade. Gabriel smiled scornfully, snatched the weapon from him, and even as he stooped to break it across his knee, gave the prince a furious blow with his head that made him stagger and sent him rolling on the floor, three paces away; then, leaning over his poor sister and gazing on her with hungry eyes, by the passing gleam of a flash, "Dead!" he repeated, wringing his arms in despair,—"dead!"

In the fearful paroxysm that compressed his throat he could find no other words to assuage his rage or to pour forth his woe. His hair, which the storm had flattened, rose on his head, the marrow of his bones was chilled, and he felt his tears rush back upon his heart. It was a terrible moment; he forgot that the murderer still lived.

The prince, however, whose admirable composure did not for a moment desert him, had risen, bruised and bleeding. Pale and trembling with rage, he sought everywhere for a weapon with which to avenge himself. Gabriel returned towards him gloomier and more ominous than ever, and grasping his neck with an iron hand, dragged him into the room where the old man was sleeping.

"Father! father! father!" he cried in a piercing

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voice, "here is the dastard who has just murdered Nisida!"

The old man, who had drunk but a few drops of the narcotic potion, was awakened by this cry which echoed through his soul; he arose as though moved by a spring, flung off his coverings, and with that promptitude of action that God has bestowed upon mothers in moments of danger, went up to his daughter's room, found a light, knelt on the edge of the bed, and began to test his child's pulse and watch her breathing with mortal anxiety.

All this had passed in less time than we have taken in telling it. Brancaleone by an unheard-of effort had freed himself from the hands of the young fisherman, and suddenly resuming his princely pride, said in a loud voice, "You shall not kill me without listening to me."

Gabriel would have overwhelmed him with bitter reproaches, but, unable to utter a single word, he burst into tears.

"Your sister is not dead," said the prince, with cold dignity; "she is merely asleep. You can assure yourself of it, and meanwhile I undertake, upon my honour, not to move a single step away."

These words were pronounced with such an accent of truth that the fisherman was struck by them. An unexpected gleam of hope suddenly

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dawned in his thoughts; he cast upon the stranger a glance of hate and distrust, and muttered in a muffled voice, "Do not flatter yourself, in any case, that you will be able to escape me."

Then he went up to his sister's room, and approaching the old man, asked tremblingly, "Well, father?"

Solomon thrust him gently aside with the solicitude of a mother removing some buzzing insect from her child's cradle, and, making a sign to enjoin silence, added in a low voice, "She is neither dead nor poisoned. Some philtre has been given to her for a bad purpose. Her breathing is even, and she cannot fail to recover from her lethargy."

Gabriel, reassured about Nisida's life, returned silently to the ground floor where he had left the seducer. His manner was grave and gloomy; he was coming now not to rend the murderer of his sister with his hands, but to elucidate a treacherous and infamous mystery, and to avenge his honour which had been basely attacked. He opened wide the double entrance door that admitted daylight to the apartment in which, on the few nights that he spent at home, he was accustomed to sleep with his father. The rain had just stopped, a ray of moonlight pierced the clouds, and all at once made its way into the room. The fisherman adjusted his dripping garments, walked towards the stranger,

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who awaited him without stirring, and after having gazed upon him haughtily, said, "Now you are going to explain your presence in our house."

"I confess," said the prince, in an easy tone and with the most insolent assurance, "that appearances are against me. It is the fate of lovers to be treated as thieves. But although I have not the advantage of being known to you, I am betrothed to the fair Nisida—with your father's approval, of course. Now, as I have the misfortune to possess very hard-hearted parents, they have had the cruelty to refuse me their consent. Love led me astray, and I was about to be guilty of a fault for which a young man like you ought to have some indulgence. Furthermore, it was nothing but a mere attempt at an abduction, with the best intentions in the world, I swear, and I am ready to atone for everything if you will agree to give me your hand and call me your brother."

"I will agree to call you a coward and a betrayer!" replied Gabriel, whose face had begun to glow, as he heard his sister spoken of with such impudent levity. "If it is thus that insults are avenged in towns, we fishers have a different plan. Ah! so you flattered yourself with the thought of bringing desolation and disgrace into our home, and of paying infamous assassins to come and share an old man's bread so as to poison his daughter, of

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stealing by night, like a brigand, armed with a dagger, into my sister's room, and of being let off by marrying the most beautiful woman in the kingdom!"

The prince made a movement.

"Listen," continued Gabriel: "I could break you as I broke your dagger just now; but I have pity on you. I see that you can do nothing with your hands, neither defend yourself nor work. Go, I begin to understand; you are a braggart, my fine sir; your poverty is usurped; you have decked yourself in these poor clothes, but you are unworthy of them."

He suffered a glance of crushing contempt to fall upon the prince, then going to a cupboard hidden in the wall, he drew out a rifle and an axe.

"Here," said he, "are all the weapons in the house; choose."

A flash of joy illuminated the countenance of the prince, who had hitherto suppressed his rage. He seized the rifle eagerly, drew three steps backward, and drawing himself up to his full height, said, "You would have done better to lend me this weapon at the beginning; for then I would have been spared from witnessing your silly vapourings and frantic convulsions. Thanks, young man; one of my servants will bring you back your gun. Farewell."

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And he threw him his purse, which fell heavily at the fisherman's feet.

"I lent you that rifle to fight with me," cried Gabriel, whom surprise had rooted to the spot.

"Move aside, my lad; you are out of your senses," said the prince, taking a step towards the door.

"So you refuse to defend yourself?" asked Gabriel in a determined voice.

"I have told you already that I cannot fight with you."

"Why not?"

"Because such is the will of God; because you are born to crawl and I to trample you under my feet; because all the blood that I could shed in this island would not purchase one drop of my blood; because a thousand lives of wretches like you are not equal to one hour of mine; because you will kneel at my name that I am now going to utter; because, in short, you are but a poor fisherman and my name is Prince of Brancaleone."

At this dreaded name, which the young nobleman flung, like a thunderbolt, at his head, the fisherman bounded like a lion. He drew a deep breath, as though he had lifted a weight that had long rested on his heart.

"Ah!" he cried, "you have given yourself into my hands, my lord! Between the poor fisherman

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and the all-powerful prince there is a debt of blood. You shall pay for yourself and for your father. We are going to settle our accounts, your excellency," he added, rising his axe over the head of the prince, who was aiming at him. "Oh! you were in too great haste to choose: the rifle is not loaded." The prince turned pale.

"Between our two families," Gabriel continued, "there exists a horrible secret which my mother confided to me on the brink of the grave, of which my father himself is unaware, and that no man in the world must learn. You are different, you are going to die."

He dragged him into the space outside the house.

"Do you know why my sister, whom you wished to dishonour, was vowed to the Madonna? Because your father, like you, wished to dishonour my mother. In your accursed house there is a tradition of infamy. You do not know what slow and terrible torments my poor mother endured—torments that broke her strength and caused her to die in early youth, and that her angelic soul dared confide to none but her son in that supreme hour and in order to bid me watch over my sister."

The fisherman wiped away a burning tear. "One day, before we were born, a fine lady, richly dressed, landed in our island from a splendid boat; she asked to see my mother, who was as young and

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beautiful as my Nisida is to-day. She could not cease from admiring her; she blamed the blindness of fate which had buried this lovely jewel in the bosom of an obscure island; she showered praises, caresses, and gifts upon my mother, and after many indirect speeches, finally asked her parents for her, that she might make her her lady-in-waiting. The poor people, foreseeing in the protection of so great a lady a brilliant future for their daughter, were weak enough to yield. That lady was your mother; and do you know why she came thus to seek that poor innocent maiden? Because your mother had a lover, and because she wished to make sure, in this infamous manner, of the prince's indulgence."

"Silence, wretch!"

"Oh, your excellency will hear me out. At the beginning, my poor mother found herself surrounded by the tenderest care: the princess could not be parted from her for a moment; the most flattering words, the finest clothes, the richest ornaments were hers; the servants paid her as much respect as though she were a daughter of the house. When her parents went to see her and to inquire whether she did not at all regret having left them, they found her so lovely and so happy, that they blessed the princess as a good angel sent them from God. Then the prince conceived a remarkable affection for my mother; little by little his manners

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became more familiar and affectionate. At last the princess went away for a few days, regretting that she could not take with her her dear child, as she called her. Then the prince's brutality knew no further barriers; he no longer concealed his shameful plans of seduction; he spread before the poor girl's eyes pearl necklaces and caskets of diamonds; he passed from the most glowing passion to the blackest fury, from the humblest prayers to the most horrible threats. The poor child was shut up in a cellar where there was hardly a gleam of daylight, and every morning a frightful gaoler came and threw her a bit of black bread, repeating with oaths that it only depended upon herself to alter all this by becoming the prince's mistress. This cruelty continued for two years. The princess had gone on a long journey, and my mother's poor parents believed that their daughter was still happy with her protectress. On her return, having, no doubt, fresh sins for which she needed forgiveness, she took my mother from her dungeon, assumed the liveliest indignation at this horrible treatment, about which she appeared to have known nothing, wiped her tears, and by an abominable refinement of perfidy received the thanks of the victim whom she was about to sacrifice.

"One evening—I have just finished, my lord—the princess chose to sup alone with her lady-in-

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waiting: the rarest fruits, the most exquisite dishes, and the most delicate wines were served to my poor mother, whose prolonged privations had injured her health and weakened her reason; she gave way to a morbid gaiety. Diabolical philtres were poured into her cup; that is another tradition in your family. My mother felt uplifted, her eyes shone with feverish brilliance, her cheeks were on fire. Then the prince came in—oh! your excellency will see that God protects the poor. My darling mother, like a frightened dove, sheltered herself in the bosom of the princess, who pushed her away, laughing. The poor distraught girl, trembling, weeping, knelt down in the midst of that infamous room. It was St. Anne's Day; all at once the house shook, the walls cracked, cries of distress rang out in the streets. My mother was saved. It was the earthquake that destroyed half Naples. You know all about it, my lord, since your old palace is no longer habitable."

"What are you driving at?" cried Brancaleone in terrible agitation.

"Oh, I merely wish to persuade you that you must fight with me," answered the fisherman coldly, as he offered him a cartridge. "And now," he added, in an excited tone, "say your prayers, my lord; for I warn you, you will die by my hand; justice must be done."

The prince carefully examined the powder and

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shot, made sure that his rifle was in good condition, loaded it, and, eager to make an end, took aim at the fisherman; but, either because he had been so much disturbed by his opponent's terrible tale, or because the grass was wet from the storm, at the moment when he put forward his left foot to steady his shot, he slipped, lost his balance and fell on one knee. He fired into the air.

"That does not count, my lord," cried Gabriel instantly, and handed him a second charge.

At the noise of the report Solomon had appeared at the window, and, understanding what was going on, had lifted his hands to heaven, in order to address to God a dumb and fervent prayer. Eligi uttered a frightful inprecation, and hastily re-loaded his rifle; but, struck by the calm confidence of the young man, who stood motionless before him, and by the old man, who, impassive and undisturbed, seemed to be conjuring God in the name of a father's authority, disconcerted by his fall, his knees shaking and his arm jarred, he felt the chills of death running in his veins. Attempting, nevertheless, to master his emotion, he took aim a second time; the bullet whistled by the fisherman's ear and buried itself in the stem of a poplar.

The prince, with the energy of despair, seized the barrel of his weapon in both hands; but Gabriel was coming forward with his axe, a terrible foe, and

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his first stroke carried away the butt of the rifle. He was still hesitating, however, to kill a defenceless man, when two armed servants appeared at the end of the pathway. Gabriel did not see them coming; but at the moment when they would have seized him by the shoulders, Solomon uttered a cry and rushed to his son's assistance.

"Help, Numa! help, Bonaroux! Death to the ruffians! They want to murder me."

"You lie, Prince of Brancaleone!" cried Gabriel, and with one blow of the axe he cleft his skull.

The two bravoes who were coming to their master's assistance, when they saw him fall, took flight; Solomon and his son went up to Nisida's room. The young girl had just shaken off her heavy slumber; a slight perspiration moistened her brow, and she opened her eyes slowly to the dawning day.

"Why are you looking at me in that way, father?" she said, her mind still wandering a little; and she passed her hand over her forehead.

The old man embraced her tenderly.

"You have just passed through a great danger, my poor Nisida," said he; "arise, and let us give thanks to the Madonna."

Then all three, kneeling before the sacred image of the Virgin, began to recite litanies. But at that very instant a noise of arms sounded in the en-

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closure, the house was surrounded by soldiers, and a lieutenant of gendarmes, seizing Gabriel, said in a loud voice, "In the name of the law, I arrest you for the murder that you have just committed upon the person of his excellency and illustrious lordship, the Prince of Brancaleone."

Nisida, struck by these words, remained pale and motionless like a marble statue kneeling on a tomb; Gabriel was already preparing to make an unreasoning resistance, when a gesture from his father stopped him.

"*Signor tenente,*" said the old man, addressing himself to the officer, "my son killed the prince in lawful defence, for the latter had scaled our house and made his way in at night and with arms in his hand. The proofs are before your eyes. Here is a ladder set up against the window; and here," he proceeded, picking up the two pieces of the broken blade, "is a dagger with the Brancaleone arms. However, we do not refuse to follow you."

The last words of the fisherman were drowned by cries of "Down with the *sbirri!* down with the gendarmes!" which were repeated in every direction. The whole island was up in arms, and the fisher-folk would have suffered themselves to be cut up to the last man before allowing a single hair of Solomon or of his son to be touched; but the old man appeared upon his threshold, and, stretching out his

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arm with a calm and grave movement that quieted the anger of the crowd, he said, "Thanks, my children; the law must be respected. I shall be able, alone, to defend the innocence of my son before the judges."

Hardly three months have elapsed since the day upon which we first beheld the old fisherman of Nisida sitting before the door of his dwelling, irradiated by all the happiness that he had succeeded in creating around him, reigning like a king, on his throne of rock, and blessing his two children, the most beautiful creatures in the island. Now the whole existence of this man, who was once so happy and so much envied, is changed. The smiling cottage, that hung over the gulf like a swan over a transparent lake, is sad and desolate; the little enclosure, with its hedges of lilac and hawthorn, where joyous groups used to come and sit at the close of day, is silent and deserted. No human sound dares to trouble the mourning of this saddened solitude. Only towards evening the waves of the sea, compassionating such great misfortunes, come to murmur plaintive notes upon the beach.

Gabriel has been condemned. The news of the high-born Prince of Brancaleone's death, so young, so handsome, and so universally adored, not only fluttered the aristocracy of Naples, but excited pro-

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found indignation in all classes of people. He was mourned by everybody, and a unanimous cry for vengeance was raised against the murderer.

The authorities opened the inquiry with alarming promptness. The magistrates whom their office called to judge this deplorable affair displayed, however, the most irreproachable integrity. No consideration outside their duty, no deference due to so noble and powerful a family, could shake the convictions of their conscience. History has kept a record of this memorable trial, and has no reproach to make to men which does not apply equally to the imperfection of human laws. The appearance of things, that fatal contradiction which the genius of evil so often here on earth gives to truth, overwhelmed the poor fisherman with the most evident proofs.

Trespolo, in whom fear had destroyed all scruples, being first examined, as having been the young prince's confidant, declared with cool impudence that, his master having shown a wish to escape for a few days from the importunities of a young married lady whose passion was beginning to tire him, had followed him to the island with three or four of his most faithful servants, and that he himself had adopted the disguise of a pilgrim, not wishing to betray his excellency's incognito to the fisher-people, who would certainly have tormented so powerful

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a person by all sorts of petitions. Two local watchmen, who had happened to be on the hillside at the moment of the crime, gave evidence that confirmed the valet's lengthy statement; hidden by some underwood, they had seen Gabriel rush upon the prince, and had distinctly heard the last words of the dying man, calling "Murder!" All the witnesses, even those summoned at the request of the prisoner, made his case worse by their statements, which they tried to make favourable. Thus the court, with its usual perspicacity and its infallible certainty, succeeded in establishing the fact that Prince Eligi of Brancaleone, having taken a temporary dislike to town life, had retired to the little island of Nisida, there to give himself up peaceably to the pleasure of fishing, for which he had at all times had a particular predilection (a proof appeared among the documents of the case that the prince had regularly been present every other year at the tunny-fishing on his property at Palermo); that when once he was thus hidden in the island, Gabriel might have recognised him, having gone with his sister to the procession, a few days before, and had, no doubt, planned to murder him. On the day before the night of the crime, the absence of Gabriel and the discomposure of his father and sister had been remarked. Towards evening the prince had dismissed his servant, and gone out alone, as his custom was, to walk

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by the seashore. Surprised by the storm and not knowing the byways of the island, he had wandered round the fisherman's house, seeking a shelter; then Gabriel, encouraged by the darkness and by the noise of the tempest, which seemed likely to cover the cries of his victim, had, after prolonged hesitation, resolved to commit his crime, and having fired two shots at the unfortunate young man without succeeding in wounding him, had put an end to him by blows of the axe; lastly, at the moment when, with Solomon's assistance, he was about to throw the body into the sea, the prince's servants having appeared, they had gone up to the girl's room, and, inventing their absurd tale, had cast themselves on their knees before the Virgin, in order to mislead the authorities. All the circumstances that poor Solomon cited in his son's favour turned against him: the ladder at Nisida's window belonged to the fisherman; the dagger which young Brancaleone always carried upon him to defend himself had evidently been taken from him after his death, and Gabriel had hastened to break it, so as to destroy, to the best of his power, the traces of his crime. Bastiano's evidence did not receive a minute's consideration: he, to destroy the idea of premeditation, declared that the young fisherman had left him only at the moment when the storm broke over the island; but, in the first place, the young diver was

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known to be Gabriel's most devoted friend and his sister's warmest admirer, and, in the second, he had been seen to land at Torre during the same hour in which he had affirmed that he was near to Nisida. As for the prince's passion for the poor peasant girl, the magistrates simply shrugged their shoulders at the ridiculous assertion of that, and especially at the young girl's alleged resistance and the extreme measures to which the prince was supposed to have resorted to conquer the virtue of Nisida. Eligi of Brancaleone was so young, so handsome, so seductive, and at the same time so cool amid his successes, that he had never been suspected of violence, except in getting rid of his mistresses. Finally, an overwhelming and unanswerable proof overthrew all the arguments for the defence: under the fisherman's bed had been found a purse with the Brancaleone arms, full of gold, the purse which, if our readers remember, the prince had flung as a last insult at Gabriel's feet.

The old man did not lose heart at this fabric of lies; after the pleadings of the advocates whose ruinous eloquence he had bought with heavy gold, he defended his son himself, and put so much truth, so much passion, and so many tears into his speech, that the whole audience was moved, and three of the judges voted for an acquittal; but the majority was against it, and the fatal verdict was pronounced.

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The news at once spread throughout the little island, and caused the deepest dejection there. The fishers who, at the first irruption of force, had risen as one man to defend their comrade's cause, bowed their heads without a murmur before the unquestioned authority of a legal judgment. Solomon received unflinchingly the stab that pierced his heart. No sigh escaped his breast; no tear came to his eyes; his wound did not bleed. Since his son's arrest he had sold all he possessed in the world, even the little silver cross left by his wife at her death, even the pearl necklace that flattered his fatherly pride by losing its whiteness against his dear Nisida's throat; the pieces of gold gained by the sale of these things he had sewn into his coarse woollen cap, and had established himself in the city. He ate nothing but the bread thrown to him by the pity of passers-by, and slept on the steps of churches or at the magistrates' door.

To estimate at its full value the heroic courage of this unhappy father, one must take a general view of the whole extent of his misfortune. Overwhelmed by age and grief, he looked forward with solemn calmness to the terrible moment which would bear his son, a few days before him, to the grave. His sharpest agony was the thought of the shame that would envelop his family. The first scaffold erected in that gently mannered island would arise

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for Gabriel, and that ignominious punishment tarnish the whole population and imprint upon it the first brand of disgrace. By a sad transition, which yet comes so easily in the destiny of man, the poor father grew to long for those moments of danger at which he had formerly trembled, those moments in which his son might have died nobly. And now all was lost: a long life of work, of abnegation, and of good deeds, a pure and stainless reputation that had extended beyond the gulf into distant countries, and the traditional admiration, rising almost to worship, of several generations; all these things only served to deepen the pit into which the fisherman had fallen, at one blow, from his kingly height. Good fame, that divine halo without which nothing here on earth is sacred, had disappeared. Men no longer dared to defend the poor wretch, they pitied him. His name would soon carry horror with it, and Nisida, poor orphan, would be nothing to anyone but the sister of a man who had been condemned to death. Even Bastiano turned away his face and wept. Thus, when every respite was over, when poor Solomon's every attempt had failed, people in the town who saw him smile strangely, as though under the obsession of some fixed idea, said to one another that the old man had lost his reason.

Gabriel saw his last day dawn, serenely and

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calmly. His sleep had been deep; he awoke full of unknown joy; a cheerful ray of sunlight, falling through the loophole, wavered over the fine golden straw in his cell; an autumn breeze playing around him, brought an agreeable coolness to his brow, and stirred in his long hair. The gaoler, who while he had had him in his charge had always behaved humanely, struck by his happy looks, hesitated to announce the priest's visit, in fear of calling the poor prisoner from his dream. Gabriel received the news with pleasure; he conversed for two hours with the good priest, and shed sweet tears on receiving the last absolution. The priest left the prison with tears in his eyes, declaring aloud that he had never in his life met with a more beautiful, pure, resigned, and courageous spirit.

The fisherman was still under the influence of this consoling emotion when his sister entered. Since the day when she had been carried, fainting, from the room where her brother had just been arrested, the poor girl, sheltered under the roof of an aunt, and accusing herself of all the evil that had befallen, had done nothing but weep at the feet of her holy protectress. Bowed by grief like a young lily before the storm, she would spend whole hours, pale, motionless, detached from earthly things, her tears flowing silently upon her beautiful clasped hands. When the moment came to go and embrace her

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brother for the last time, Nisida arose with the courage of a saint. She wiped away the traces of her tears, smoothed her beautiful black hair, and put on her best white dress. Poor child, she tried to hide her grief by an angelic deception. She had the strength to smile! At the sight of her alarming pallor Gabriel felt his heart wrung, a cloud passed over his eyes; he would have run to meet her, but, held back by the chain which fettered him to a pillar of his prison, stepped back sharply and stumbled. Nisida flew to her brother and upheld him in her arms. The young girl had understood him; she assured him that she was well. Fearing to remind him of his terrible position, she spoke volubly of all manner of things—her aunt, the weather, the Madonna. Then she stopped suddenly, frightened at her own words, frightened at her own silence; she fixed her burning gaze upon her brother's brow as though to fascinate him. Little by little animation returned to her; a faint colour tinted her hollowed cheeks, and Gabriel, deceived by the maiden's superhuman efforts, thought her still beautiful, and thanked God in his heart for having spared this tender creature. Nisida, as though she had followed her brother's secret thoughts, came close to him, pressed his hand with an air of understanding, and murmured low in his ear, "Fortunately our father has been away for two days; he sent me word

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that he would be detained in town. For us, it is different; we are young, we have courage!"

The poor young girl was trembling like a leaf.

"What will become of you, my poor Nisida?"

"Bah! I will pray to the Madonna. Does she not watch over us?" The girl stopped, struck by the sound of her own words, which the circumstances so cruelly contradicted. But looking at her brother, she went on in a low tone: "Assuredly she does watch over us. She appeared to me last night in a dream. She held her child Jesus on her arm, and looked at me with a mother's tenderness. She wishes to make saints of us, for she loves us; and to be a saint, you see, Gabriel, one must suffer."

"Well, go and pray for me, my kind sister; go away from the view of this sad place, which will eventually shake your firmness, and perhaps mine. Go; we shall see each other again in heaven above, where our mother is waiting for us—our mother whom you have not known, and to whom I shall often speak of you. Farewell, my sister, until we meet again!"

And he kissed her on the forehead.

The young girl called up all her strength into her heart for this supreme moment; she walked with a firm step; having reached the threshold, she turned round and waved him a farewell, preventing herself

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by a nervous contraction from bursting into tears, but as soon as she was in the corridor, a sob broke from her bosom, and Gabriel, who heard it echo from the vaulted roof, thought that his heart would break.

Then he threw himself on his knees, and, lifting his hands to heaven, cried, "I have finished suffering; I have nothing more that holds me to life. I thank Thee, my God! Thou hast kept my father away, and hast been willing to spare the poor old man a grief that would have been beyond his strength."

It was at the hour of noon, after having exhausted every possible means, poured out his gold to the last piece, and embraced the knees of the lowest serving-man, that Solomon the fisherman took his way to his son's prison. His brow was so woebegone that the guards drew back, seized with pity, and the gaoler wept as he closed the door of the cell upon him. The old man remained some moments without advancing a step, absorbed in contemplation of his son. By the tawny gleam of his eye might be divined that the soul of the man was moved at that instant by some dark project. He seemed nevertheless struck by the beauty of Gabriel's face. Three months in prison had restored to his skin the whiteness that the sun had turned brown; his fine dark hair fell in curls around his neck, his eyes rested

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on his father with a liquid and brilliant gaze. Never had this head been so beautiful as now, when it was to fall.

"Alas, my poor son!" said the old man, "there is no hope left; you must die."

"I know it," answered Gabriel in a tone of tender reproach, "and it is not that which most afflicts me at this moment. But you, too, why do you wish to give me pain, at your age? Why did you not stay in the town?"

"In the town," the old man returned, "they have no pity; I cast myself at the king's feet, at everybody's feet; there is no pardon, no mercy for us."

"Well, in God's name, what is death to me? I meet it daily on the sea. My greatest, my only torment is the pain that they are causing you."

"And I, do you think, my Gabriel, that I only suffer in seeing you die? Oh, it is but a parting for a few days; I shall soon go to join you. But a darker sorrow weighs upon me. I am strong, I am a man——" He stopped, fearing that he had said too much; then drawing near to his son, he said in a tearful voice, "Forgive me, my Gabriel; I am the cause of your death. I ought to have killed the prince with my own hand. In our country, children and old men are not condemned to death. I am over eighty years old; I should have been pardoned—

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they told me that when, with tears, I asked pardon for you; once more, forgive me, Gabriel; I thought my daughter was dead; I thought of nothing else; and besides, I did not know the law."

"Father, father!" cried Gabriel, touched, "what are you saying? I would have given my life a thousand times over to purchase one day of yours. Since you are strong enough to be present at my last hour, fear not; you will not see me turn pale; your son will be worthy of you."

"And he is to die, to die!" cried Solomon, striking his forehead in despair, and casting on the walls of the dungeon a look of fire that would fain have pierced them.

"I am resigned, father," said Gabriel gently; "did not Christ ascend the cross?"

"Yes," murmured the old man in a muffled voice, "but He did not leave behind a sister dishonoured by His death."

These words, which escaped the old fisherman in spite of himself, threw a sudden and terrible light into the soul of Gabriel. For the first time he perceived all the infamous manner of his death: the shameless populace crowding round the scaffold, the hateful hand of the executioner taking him by the hair, and the drops of his blood besprinkling the white raiment of his sister and covering her with shame.

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"Oh, if I could get a weapon!" cried Gabriel, his haggard eyes roaming around.

"It is not the weapon that is lacking," answered Solomon, carrying his hand to the hilt of a dagger that he had hidden in his breast.

"Then kill me, father," said Gabriel in a low tone, but with an irresistible accent of persuasion and entreaty; "oh yes, I confess it now, the executioner's hand frightens me. My Nisida, my poor Nisida, I have seen her; she was here just now, as beautiful and as pale as the Madonna Dolorosa; she smiled to hide from me her sufferings. She was happy, poor girl, because she believed you away. Oh, how sweet it will be to me to die by your hand! You gave me life; take it back, father, since God will have it so. And Nisida will be saved. Oh, do not hesitate! It would be a cowardice on the part of both of us; she is my sister, she is your daughter."

And seeing that his powerful will had subjugated the old man, he said, "Help! help, father!" and offered his breast to the blow. The poor father lifted his hand to strike; but a mortal convulsion ran through all his limbs; he fell into his son's arms, and both burst into tears.

"Poor father!" said Gabriel. "I ought to have foreseen that. Give me that dagger and turn away; I am young and my arm will not tremble."

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"Oh no!" returned Solomon solemnly, "no, my son, for then you would be a suicide! Let your soul ascend to heaven pure! God will give me His strength. Moreover, we have time yet."

And a last ray of hope shone in the eyes of the fisherman.

Then there passed in that dungeon one of those scenes that words can never reproduce. The poor father sat down on the straw at his son's side and laid his head gently upon his knees. He smiled to him through his tears, as one smiles to a sick child; he passed his hand slowly through the silky curls of his hair, and asked him countless questions, intermingled with caresses. In order to give him a distaste for this world he kept on talking to him of the other. Then, with a sudden change, he questioned him minutely about all sorts of past matters. Sometimes he stopped in alarm, and counted the beatings of his heart, which were hurriedly marking the passage of time.

"Tell me everything, my child; have you any desire, any wish that could be satisfied before you die? Are you leaving any woman whom you loved secretly? Everything we have left shall be hers."

"I regret nothing on earth but you and my sister. You are the only persons whom I have loved since my mother's death."

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"Well, be comforted. Your sister will be saved."

"Oh yes! I shall die happy."

"Do you forgive our enemies?"

"With all the strength of my heart. I pray God to have mercy on the witnesses who accused me. May He forgive me my sins!"

"How old is it that you will soon be?" the old man asked suddenly, for his reason was beginning to totter, and his memory had failed him.

"I was twenty-five on All Hallows' Day."

"True; it was a sad day, this year; you were in prison."

"Do you remember how, five years ago, on that same day I got the prize in the regatta at Venice?"

"Tell me about that, my child."

And he listened, his neck stretched forward, his mouth half open, his hands in his son's. A sound of steps came in from the corridor, and a dull knock was struck upon the door. It was the fatal hour. The poor father had forgotten it.

The priests had already begun to sing the death hymn; the executioner was ready, the procession had set out, when Solomon the fisherman appeared suddenly on the threshold of the prison, his eyes aflame and his brow radiant with the halo of the patriarchs. The old man drew himself up to his full height, and raising in one hand the reddened knife,

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said in a sublime voice, "The sacrifice is fulfilled. God did not send His angel to stay the hand of Abraham."

The crowd carried him in triumph.[1]

[1] The details of this case are recorded in the archives of the Criminal Court at Naples. We have changed nothing in the age or position of the persons who appear in this narrative. One of the most celebrated advocates at the Neapolitan bar secured the acquittal of the old man.

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